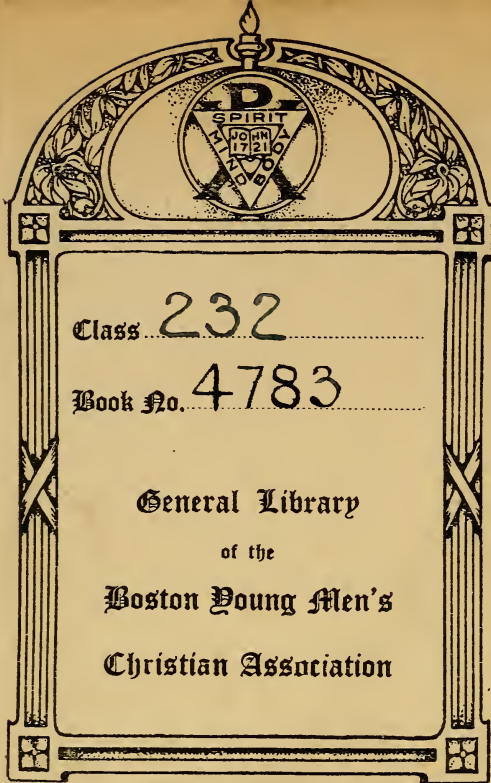


THE HEART OF THE MASTER



WILLIAM BURNET WRIGHT



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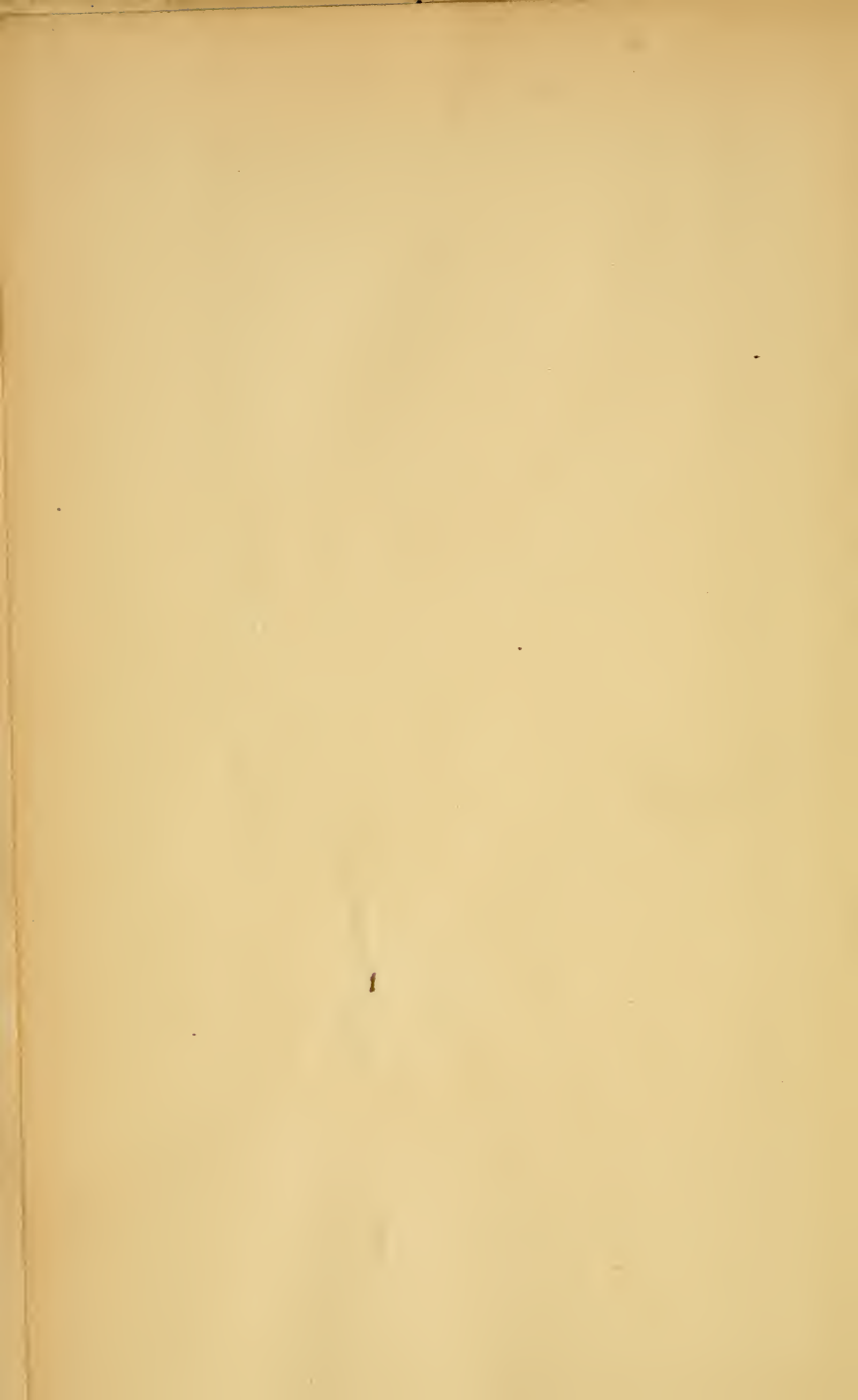
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By William Burnet Wright

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THE HEART OF THE MASTER

BY

WILLIAM BURNET WRIGHT

*Author of "Ancient Cities, from the Dawn to
the Daylight," etc.*



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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PREFACE

CERTAIN words spoken and deeds done by our Saviour the last week of his life are generally understood in senses that contradict the whole tenor of his precepts and example. So understood they have armed skeptics, troubled believers, and obscured for all his spiritual splendor. I believe that this appearance of inconsistency, wherever it occurs, has been caused by a misunderstanding of the Master's language or action. A goodly number of earnest and devout believers, troubled by what looked to them like "variableness or the shadow of turning" in their Saviour, have assured me that they found relief from their trouble in the views presented on the following pages. Their experience encourages the hope that others, troubled as they were, may share their sense of relief.

W. B. W.

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THE HEART OF THE MASTER

CHAPTER I

THE VESTIBULE AND THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE

Two deeds drew from our Saviour praise which has made them shine like stars in the darkness of Holy Week. Both were done by women,—one by a nameless widow so poor that two mites, which make a farthing, constituted all her living; the other by a lady of means whose name is honored wherever the gospel is preached.

What the widow did no one but the Saviour noticed until he pointed to it. What the lady did was noticed apparently only to be blamed, until his approbation of her conduct shamed her censors into silence. Of the widow who gave the two mites he said, "She hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury."

To Mary for pouring the spikenard upon him he gave not only the highest, but greatly the highest, commendation he ever bestowed upon any human being. His praise of her is a

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key that unlocks the closet of his soul. It reveals the purpose which led him into Holy Week and the spirit in which he bore the outrages it brought him. It shows how he felt when mocked and scourged and crucified. If we use it to interpret the narrative we shall see that the cross, even while he hung upon it, seemed to him, what Paul said it was, a triumphal chariot. We shall perceive that he climbed the steeps of Calvary not with weariness and heartbreak, as poets and painters have beguiled us into fancying, but with joy such as in the shadow of Gethsemane he prayed that his disciples "might have fulfilled in themselves." We shall hear in the cry, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me," not a shriek of despair, but a clarion cry of victory. It will grow as plain to us as it was to the Evangelists and to Paul that every tear he shed was for others, while for all that was inflicted upon himself he had only thanksgiving.

For this reason the feast at Bethany seems to me the proper entrance into Holy Week, and therefore I call the chamber in which it was held, "The Vestibule."

But because I believe that the words Christ spoke of Mary reveal the most that we can know

THE INTERPRETER'S HOUSE 3

of the emotions excited in him by the events which gave to Holy Week its name, I call the place in which those words were spoken, "The Interpreter's House."

To understand what was said at the feast we must look into the room where it was held.

The table stands a few inches above the floor. The guests around it recline on mats or cushions broad and long enough to be called couches. These are placed so that their occupants, each leaning upon the left arm, face the board, while their feet are at a considerable distance from it. The company has been assembled to welcome and to honor Jesus, and he is there.

During the meal Mary came quietly behind him with a flask of costly ointment in her hand. The flask was hermetically sealed by a thin parchment over its mouth. Breaking the parchment by the pressure of her thumb she poured a part of the fragrant oil upon his head and the rest upon his feet. This was done so unobtrusively that no one noticed it until the fragrance of the unguent filled the room, and the doer of the deed, like him who inspired it, "could not be hid." As soon as they saw what she had done, some of the guests began whispering to each other strictures on her extravagance. Even

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the disciples "had indignation," saying, "To what purpose is this waste?"

Judas Iscariot muttered, "Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor?" It does not seem to have occurred to him that, by substituting bread and water for the viands of which it is safe to infer he had not scrupled to partake, a considerable sum might have been saved for the object he proposed.

These censures of the woman who before this had been blamed for choosing "the good part" ought not to surprise us. Deeds of transcendent excellence are rarely understood until time has interpreted them. It is only second-rate goodness that men appreciate easily and at once.

To those who found fault with Mary our Lord made these five replies:—

1. "She hath wrought a good work on me." That word "good" was spoken in Aramaic. We cannot therefore be certain what it was, but to translate it into Greek the authors of "Matthew" and of "Mark" selected the strongest adjective of admiration that language contains. It is a word which carried the conception of virtue clothed in beauty. Homer applied it to a goblet of gold exquisitely wrought; to a song

that excelled in sweetness all earthly music ; to conduct becoming an august sire who had been nurtured by Zeus. Plato employed it to describe perfection of moral loveliness. Peter chose it to portray the beatitude of sharing with Moses and Elias in glory the companionship of Christ. Paul used it to designate the conduct that earned for him the crown of righteousness ; to show Timothy the kind of minister he should strive to become, and to make clear what manner of men the soldiers of Christ should be. The Master is reported as using it to describe the pearl of great price, the hearts " honest and good " in which the word of the kingdom bears fruit an hundredfold, and the works which move men to glorify the Father who inspires them. Our version fails to reveal the word's impassioned significance. We should understand the whole scene better if instead of " She hath wrought a good work " we read, " She hath done a superb, a magnificent, a heroic deed."

2. " She hath done what she could." That is, " all in her power." He never said so much of any other human being. More could not be predicated of the Father " who maketh his sun to rise." He who is the Truth said it of Mary.

3. He ranked her deed higher than caring

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for the poor. Yet in the parable of "The Last Judgment" he declared that they who fed the hungry and clothed the naked should enter into the joy of their Lord and inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.

4. He selected this deed from all he ever witnessed to be held before the eyes of men to the end of time, and said it should be spoken of "as a memorial of her" wherever in the whole world his gospel should be preached.

5. For doing it he classed her in dignity and worth so far above every other person present that, as in looking at a star the distance between the base and the summit of a mountain ceases to signify, so, for the moment, the distance between John and Judas vanished by comparison with the distance between them both and her.

Grouping John and Judas and all those before him together, he pointed to the gentle woman bending behind him and said, "Why trouble *ye her*?" As if she had done what none of them could imitate or comprehend.

Such were the words that descending like a dove upon Mary said, "This is my beloved daughter in whom I am well pleased."

What was it that touched our Lord so deeply?

Was it the giving of fifty or three hundred dollars — let those who think it worth their while compute the amount — for love's sake? If that were all, the poor widow who cast into the Lord's treasury "all her living" would have deserved more praise than the wealthy lady.

The disciples saw in Mary's sacrifice only what could be measured by money. Jesus, therefore, descending for a moment to the level of their intelligence, showed them that even in the scales they used they had weighed falsely the deed they condemned. "For ye have the poor always with you, but me ye have not always." But he did not leave them ignorant of the cause that excited his admiration. "For in that she poured this ointment upon my body she did it to prepare me for my burial."

Mary knew that Christ had come up to Jerusalem to die. She tried to help him accomplish his purpose. That was the fact which moved him so profoundly. For it showed that of all those whose spiritual eyes he had striven to open she was the only one with whom he had succeeded. She understood his character and comprehended his mission. She had not followed him for years, listening every day to his teachings. She had sat at his feet only now

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and again. Yet she had mastered perfectly the utterances he had not been able to make intelligible even to his mother and that disciple whom he loved. She alone comprehended that his Father had sent him into the world to give his life for the world, and that to do the will of his father was his glory. Though he had often declared the truth to the Twelve, they would not or could not receive it. Before leaving Galilee on this last journey Peter heard Moses and Elias speak of "the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." Yet a little later, when the Master repeated what Moses and Elias had said, Peter rebuked him, saying, "Far be it from thee!" and had to be silenced with the ominous words, "Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art a stumbling-block unto me." The evening before his death, when he made the bread and the wine emphasize what he told them was at hand, not even then did the disciples apprehend his meaning. In the cross they saw only ruin. The resurrection itself failed to banish their dream of a golden crown and an iron sceptre.¹

But Mary saw in the cross and the sepulchre what nineteen centuries, each pointing to them

¹ Acts i, 6.

with unswerving finger, have not yet enabled us distinctly to discern. She anointed Christ to prepare him for his burial because she believed what he had said, and knew that he was King of Kings because he had chosen to be crowned with thorns, and Lord of Lords because he would write his title not in the blood of his enemies, but in his own.

It is a precious thing for a good man misunderstood and venomously maligned to feel that some one understands him. When one who could easily win the world's admiration, if he would use the world's weapons, continues poor and neglected because he chooses to spend his life in ministering rather than in being ministered unto, it is more than meat and drink for him to hear a daughter say, "I understand you, father! I glory in you. What is the world's judgment to me? I can wait till the Lamb's book is opened. There shall men see your name when Cæsar is forgotten."

That is a comfort next to God's whisper; nay, it is God's whisper: "Well done, good and faithful!" So Mary's silent action spoke to Christ. Of course the others did not understand her. They could not till they learned to understand him. Not only did Mary understand

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her Lord, she made his purpose her own and tried to do what the angel did in Gethsemane, strengthen him for its accomplishment.

She was aware that the authorities in Jerusalem meant to kill him. She knew that this feast would advertise his presence and accelerate their action, as we know it did. In such a crisis a love less loyal than hers would have urged him to fly. Escape still seemed possible. The disciples had counseled it; not so Mary. Better in her sight Christ dying Christ than living less than Christ. Now that his hour had come, a shadow of hesitation, the quiver of an eyelid at sight of the cross, would prove him less than she knows him to be.

There was a time when the slave power dominated the United States. Then to be known as an Abolitionist was to invite social ostracism, to imperil business prospects, and to risk life at the hands of mobs. At that time many a man, when the balances within him quivered between conscience and apparent self-interest, heard the woman he loved best speak with the voice of Mary and decided for the right. The last year of his life Wendell Phillips said to me of his invalid wife, "If I have been of any use to God or man, it is her work."

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Those who remember the words, "Wendell, don't shilly-shally!" will understand.

When the flame kindled in New England had reached the prairies, and those who fought to quench it were scarring the continent, many a patriot brought home from his day's work a heart heavy with the conviction that it was his duty to enlist. His burden was not fear of death. It was the thought, "How can I break it to Mary!"

But he found no need of breaking it to her, for she knew what was in him. She read his unspoken grief and lifted his burden by the words, "Yes, John, it is your duty. God will take care of me and the children."

Then she smiled while he watched her pack his little outfit. He never knew how she cried when he was not looking, but went forth and did a man's work because an angel had strengthened him.

That experience was duplicated in many a Southern home, where hearts were right though heads were wrong.

So Mary ministered to Christ. As far as we know she gave him the only intelligent sympathy and encouragement he ever received from man or woman. He needed no such help to

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strengthen his resolution, but others do, and his praise of her marks those who give it as doers of the best work that is done in this world.

Even before she heard her Lord's approval Mary had a great reward. For hers was a deed of splendid daring, and bravery is bliss. The anointing identified her with the cause of Christ. It was sure to bring upon herself, her sister, and her brother the implacable enmity of the powerful priesthood, and it would probably be misreported by malignant and unscrupulous detractors as treason to Cæsar. But she counted her wealth, and she was not poor; her life, and to those who love Christ best life is most precious, because of the ability it gives to serve him; her dear ones, and those most devoted to Christ are most certain to obey his command, "Love one another as I have loved you," — these all she counted as sacrifices willingly offered for Christ's sake. To give all for him was her reward till even that was swallowed up by the beatitude of her Lord's "Well done."

If I have read this scene correctly, — and any other reading makes the deed which the Saviour praised above all others appear a paltry weighing of love against money in scales which Judas always and Jesus never used, — it shines over

the whole of Holy Week, giving to them that mourn in Zion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. By revealing the heart of Christ, by showing how he regarded his sufferings, it turns that midnight into day. We shall see him slandered, betrayed, smitten, reviled, mocked, deserted, denied by the man he selected to feed his sheep and shepherd his lambs. We shall see him fettered and led from place to place with jeers and insults. But in the house at Bethany we learn that these things, which to others seemed only sources of agony, appeared to him — as we who have seen to the end now know they were — steps in the stairs of glory. He received them as he taught Mary to view them. Therefore he came forth from Gethsemane with a majesty that made the soldiers draw back and fall upon the ground before him. When he announced himself to Caiaphas as the Son of God and to Pilate as a king; when he said to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," these were not foregleams of a light yet to come, but in every outrage and contumely wherein the blind eyes of men saw only a new humiliation, he heard the call to come up higher, and obeyed it with clear perception of the more than twelve

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legions of angels who saw as Mary saw, felt as Mary felt, and therefore sang with voices to which mortal ears were deaf, "Glory to God in the highest," while men sneered, "Hail, King of the Jews."

CHAPTER II

ENTERING JERUSALEM

THE disciples did not understand the behavior of Mary Saturday evening. Therefore it offended them. But it pleased the Master. They did not understand the behavior of the people Sunday morning. Therefore it pleased them. But it made the Master weep.

The manner of his reception showed that his purpose in coming as he did was thwarted. Just before entering Jerusalem he cried out in an agony of lamentation. When he passed through the gate of the city his cheeks were wet with tears. Strangely enough this has been named "the triumphal entry."

The word used to describe the grief of Jesus at the grave of Lazarus was not strong enough to express the agony he felt when "all Jerusalem was stirred" by his approach. For *that* the word was needed which tells how Rachel wept for her children; how Jairus lamented for his only daughter, and the widow of Nain for her only son; how Peter "wept bitterly" when the

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Lord turned and looked upon him; how the disciples "mourned" till they heard "He is risen."

Our Saviour often visited Jerusalem. Why is it that we call the only time he entered it with a breaking heart, the time of his "triumphal entry"? Is it not because we have viewed him through the eyes of those who censured Mary, and forgotten how he praised her?

Renan tells us that the palms and the pæans gave Jesus "yet another moment of satisfaction," though the only emotion he is recorded to have felt was profoundest sorrow.

Professor Geikie says: "He had determined with calm deliberation and consciousness of what it involved to enter Jerusalem with such circumstances as would openly announce his claims to be Messiah. He would no longer check the popular feeling in his favor."

The devout and gentle Dr. Hanna exclaims: "They hail him as their Messiah, their king. He does now what he never did before. He accepts the title. He receives the homage."

These writers represent very different schools. They are rarely in complete agreement. But here they are at one. Each of them thinks that on this occasion Christ departed from the prin-

ciple he had always previously preached and practiced. But would not that have been to end his ministry as Satan had tempted him to begin it? Assuredly it would have come near to doing what he had refused to do when he hid himself because the Galileans wished to make him a king by force.

Is it likely that five days before saying to Pilate, "My kingdom is not of this world," our Lord assumed as much of earthly pomp as he could command, and entered the city whither he had come to die, in a way which proclaimed that his kingdom *was* "of this world"? Indeed the words, "else would my servants fight," spoken as they were when even of the Twelve one had betrayed, another had denied, and all had deserted him; spoken when he had not a single servant, would have seemed to the procurator utterly absurd if he had not known that a few days before all Jerusalem had been eager to serve him..

In the so-called "triumphal entry" I can find no swerving from the principles our Lord had uniformly practiced. It seems to me a conspicuous example of obedience to them.

It is true that during the greater part of that last journey from Galilee he had ceased to shun

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publicity. He sent his disciples before him to prepare for his coming. He no longer told those he healed to keep silence. He attracted attention by the most moving parables he ever spoke, and the most amazing miracles he ever wrought. But the message he thus proclaimed from the housetop was the same he had always spoken in the closet.

From the day in which the Baptist recognized in him the Messiah, he accepted the title wherever it was intelligently given. It was only those who meant by it an earthly monarch to whom he said, "Tell no man!" He instructed the Baptist, Nicodemus, the Sons of Zebedee who wished to call down fire from heaven, the woman of Samaria, Peter, who exclaimed, "Far be it from thee," that they were wholly right in counting him Messiah, and wholly wrong in thinking that Messiah's mission was not to save by his sufferings, but to punish by his power. At each step of his last journey he repeated those assertions with louder voice and to larger audiences. The crowds that welcomed him increased. He accepted their homage as he had accepted the homage of individuals. But he was careful in every instance to speak a parable or do a deed which emphasized the fact that

because he was Messiah he must be rejected of men and crucified. In the minds of his disciples the conviction that he was the Christ grew steadily stronger. But that because he was the Christ it became him to give his life to the tormentors, and that therefore he was going to Jerusalem to be slain, they could not or would not believe. Neither did the people understand when in parables he repeated the statement to them. No one believed him save Mary of Bethany.

At Jericho blind men hailed him by the holy name. He accepted the title and proved his right to it by a miracle. But when the populace bowed to his authority and expected his kingdom to "immediately appear," he spoke a parable to destroy their expectations, and disappointed their hopes by selecting for his host not an influential magnate, but a despised publican.

Still no one but Mary believed what he repeated so often, so plainly, so earnestly. Still the disciples dreamed of a kingdom to be established by force. Some of them were scheming to gain its chief offices. Still the people looked to find in him a greater Cæsar.

"The triumphal entry" seems to me a final effort to destroy all such delusions.

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At the beginning of his ministry Christ was urged by the tempter to take those weapons which the world deems strongest. I think Matthew inserts the "Sermon on the Mount" so soon after his account of the Temptation because the truths it proclaims are categorical contradictions of the falsehoods Satan whispered in the wilderness. The last week of Christ's ministry the same temptations assailed him. They met the same replies. For, as will soon appear, what the Master affirmed in the wilderness and repeated on the Mountain he reiterated before the whole nation in pantomime more impressive than speech by his public entry into Jerusalem. By it he postponed the calamities impending over the city he could not save.

To make this plain a brief review of the political condition of Judæa at the time is needful.

Galilee was the most turbulent district of Palestine. The north margin of that province was a hunting-ground infested by wild beasts. In it bandits and desperadoes found refuge from the laws they defied. The southern part of the region was peopled by a hardy race preëminent for strength, valor, and patriotism. In rancorous hatred of foreign domination they surpassed

all other Israelites. In them Herod the Great encountered the most formidable obstacle to his usurpation. To subjugate them strained his resources and required all his rare military genius. It was only by incessant watchfulness that Rome succeeded in keeping them under her yoke. They supplied all Judæa with the leaven of insurrection. The powder for every political explosion from the time of Pompey to that of Titus was manufactured in Galilee. Galileans were the inciters and leaders in most of these uprisings which threatened Roman supremacy, and in all of them Galilean influence was efficient. Pilate had already crushed in the bud one outbreak, or at least thought he had, by the slaughter of certain Galileans, to whom he attributed its origin. They had come to Jerusalem nominally, perhaps really, on a purely religious mission, and, we may be confident, he had been drawn thither at this passover time by apprehensions of some similar disturbance.

He had good reason to know that the city was seething in angry passions, and needed only a leader to rise against his detested authority. The multitude brought together by Israel's Independence Day would fan in every Jewish heart the fire of patriotism, and it was practi-

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cally certain that if a conflagration ensued it would be the outcome of a conspiracy organized in Galilee and led by a Galilean. There were many who believed with Caiaphas that Jesus of Nazareth was the longed-for Garibaldi.

Watchful as the Romans were for every sign of rebellion, their watchfulness concentrated as it was upon Galilee, it is scarcely possible that disturbing rumors of the Galilean prophet had failed to reach Pilate's ears. The immense popularity of Jesus; the frequency with which he had been hailed as the Son of David destined to set his people free and restore their vanished glory; his prodigious claims, the nature of which no foreigner could understand; and the marvelous deeds by which he authenticated his claims; these facts, colored by the passionate prejudices of those who reported them, were more than enough to excite solicitude in men wiser and braver than Pilate. The procurator had additional reasons for suspecting that the Galileans already in Jerusalem had taken Christ for their commander and were awaiting his arrival with sinister designs.

Recently, probably on his way to this pass-over, Jesus had publicly expressed sentiments which, honestly misquoted and diffused through

partisan channels, might be mistaken for a justification of the Galileans whom Pilate had slain, a vehement arraignment of Pilate for slaying them, and a virtual summons to cast off Pilate's authority.¹

There was another circumstance which could not have tended to allay suspicions generated by these facts. Two of the Nazarene's immediate agents bore the name of that Galilean who incited and conducted the formidable rebellion against Quirinius which was fresh in the memory of men still living, and one of the two was known as a member of "that fanatical party organized by Judas of Galilee" which brought about the ruin of the people by leading them into a war against Rome.

There was no lack of nimble reporters carrying to Pilate plausible perversions of the Master's words and deeds. Caiaphas is authority for affirming that Jerusalem was rapidly adopting the Galilean estimate of Christ.² The raising of Lazarus could not be concealed, could not be denied, and could not be explained, unless Jesus possessed the power with which he was accredited by Galilee. John tells us the report of

¹ Luke xiii, 1f. See Godet *in loco*.

² John xi, 49, 50.

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that miracle brought the multitude forth from Jerusalem to welcome the Saviour.

All these facts confirm the statement which Renan and others have so greatly belittled: "And when he was come into Jerusalem all the city was stirred."¹ It seems certain that Sunday morning the Galileans intended, the Judæans hoped for, the Romans expected an insurrection. Such was the state of things when the populace went forth to welcome Jesus.

There are crises when a thoughtless word may be a spark to gunpowder. There are times when to do nothing is to do everything that ought not to be done. An unwise word from Christ that Sunday morning, or even his silence and inaction, would probably have caused Pilate to mingle again with their sacrifices the blood not only of Galileans but of Judæans also. Our Lord met the emergency with a wisdom which prevented the catastrophe. Aware of the ferment in the city and of the governor's suspicions, he entered Jerusalem in a way that thwarted the hopes of all who were infected with the Galilean spirit, while it allayed the anxiety of those who shared the apprehensions of the Romans.

The prophecy of Zechariah was familiar to all

¹ Matt. xxi, 10, R. V.

Israelites. It revealed the Messiah's character and purpose by describing the manner of his coming. Upon a background of oppression, war, and bloodshed, it painted him as a prince of peace who relied upon moral power alone.

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation." He will come, continued the prediction, not as warriors come; riding not as warriors ride, but "lowly, and riding upon an ass, even upon a colt the foal of an ass" (the emblem of peace). "And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse" (emblem of war) "from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations: and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."¹

Our Lord carefully arranged his entrance so as to fulfill this prediction. By doing so he raised a white flag when a red one was expected. The turbulent saw their hopes rebuked by the reference to their scriptures. The Romans understood the obvious significance of the pantomime. Though the protest proved only partially effective, I can imagine no other way in which our

¹ Zech. ix, 9, 10.

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Lord could have proclaimed so distinctly and with so strong an emphasis the fact upon which he had always insisted and which he would soon repeat to Pilate himself, that because he was Messiah his kingdom was not "of this world" and therefore he would not permit his servants to fight. Doubtless to those who were near him he spoke words which deepened the impression his appearance was designed to make; words which told his deluded followers that he was not the political champion they desired. For when the populace would not understand as he drew near the city, he broke forth in the agonized lamentation: "O that thou hadst known in this day, even thou, the things which belong unto peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes!"¹ It was a declaration that the people had not understood what he was trying to teach them.

Does the reader ask: "If the Saviour strove so hard to destroy their delusion why did he not succeed"? The answer may be found in another question. "Why, when three centuries had borne witness to the power of the cross, did so many agree with Constantine in thinking it impotent unless used as a sword hilt? Why,

¹ Luke xix, 42, R. V., Margin.

after nineteen centuries of saying 'Lord ! Lord,' do the nations of Christendom continue to waste their substance and brutalize their people under the delusion that their salvation depends upon their readiness to fight? "

Three results were accomplished by the entry. It thwarted for a time, though it did not quench, the fierce fanaticism of the populace. It allayed the anxieties of the Romans. It promised that he would conquer by moral force alone all the powers that could be arrayed against him. Holy Week tells us how that promise was perfectly fulfilled.

Assailed by the stratagems of wily politicians, by the conspiracies of ecclesiastics, the bigotry of priests, the cowardice of magistrates, the trained sagacity of lawyers, the meanness of mortified vanity, the sophistries of philosophers, the avarice of trade monopolies, the treachery of friends, the animosities of perverted patriotism, the rage of thwarted factions, the brutality of mobs, by physical torture and mental agony,'

¹ Wily politicians, Mark xii, 13; conspiracies of ecclesiastics, Matt. xxii, 15; bigotry of priests, Matt. xxvi, 65; cowardice of magistrates, John xii, 42; Mark xv, 15; sagacity of lawyers, Mark xi, 28; meanness of mortified vanity, Luke xxiii, 11; sophistries of philosophers, Mark xii, 18; avarice of

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he conquered them all by sheer moral force. Then, and not till then, of his own will he laid down the life of which without his consent the united powers of this world were not strong enough to rob him. Early in his ministry, "seeing the multitude he went up into a mountain, and when he was set his disciples came unto him, and he opened his mouth and taught them, saying" in words what his entry into Jerusalem repeated in pantomime.

For when the people shouted "Hosanna," his attitude replied, —

"Blessed are the poor in spirit!"

When they cried, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" his tears responded, "Blessed are they that mourn."

The entire pageant, disarming as it did the Romans of their suspicions and postponing as it did for nearly a generation the destruction of the city, mutely asserted, —

"Blessed are the peacemakers."

And when he had entered the gates his ac-

trade monopolies, Mark xi, 15; treachery of friends, Mark xiv, 45; animosities of perverted patriotism, John xi, 49, 50; rage of mobs, Mark xv, 13; brutality of soldiers, John xix, 2ff; physical torture, John xix, 1; mental agony, Mark xiv, 34; Matt. xxvi, 38; Luke xxii, 44.

tions continued for five days to reiterate the truths which nineteen centuries have attested : —

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.”

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.”

“Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

“Every one . . . that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them shall be likened unto a wise man that built his house upon a rock.”

To recapitulate: Though beneath the withered leaves of the fig tree Christ explained to the Twelve the significance of the demonstration which welcomed him to the Holy City, even they did not comprehend the purpose of the pageant that provoked it, until they reviewed the whole scene by the light of the resurrection.¹

It is not strange that the people failed to understand what even the Twelve misunderstood. The Saviour knew, what the words² of Caiaphas, spoken *after the great popular demonstration* and in view of it, showed that he also was aware of, namely, that the people welcomed him because they meant to make him king

¹ John xii, 16.

² John xi, 50.

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in a way that would provoke the Romans to a war of extermination.

Our Lord designed by the manner of his public entry to correct the popular delusion and to exorcise the spirit that gave it birth. He did not succeed in that purpose. When he perceived that his effort had failed ; that it had not weakened, but had strengthened in the people the passions which were driving them to their own destruction ; that they had misconstrued the purpose of his coming, misread all he had done that day, perverting his proclamation of peace into a declaration of war ; that in spite of all he could do they continued to cherish the spirit which in a few years brought upon Jerusalem the horrors in which she perished, his agony broke forth in the lamentation over the blindness she had that day exhibited.¹

¹ “The time of thy visitation.” Luke xix, 44 and xix, 42, R. V. “This thy day.” “*Now* they are hid from thine eyes.” Our Lord’s lament was over the behavior of the people as he entered Jerusalem. It is because they do not understand “*this day* the things which belong unto peace” ; because “*now* they are hid from thine eyes” ; because they know not the meaning of his coming as he came *then* and *there* (“thy visitation”), that his grief was so great. That they hailed him as the appointed liberator from Roman oppression and the restorer of the glories of David’s kingdom is

It was the outcry of a watchman who, when to the onrushing train he has signaled danger in every way he can, perceives that the engineer through color-blindness has mistaken red for white and is rushing upon inevitable ruin.

He saw his own power and goodness made the occasion of fatal delusion. These crowds which seek him not because of the signs he has wrought, but for the loaves and fishes they hope to get, are deaf to his warning. He alone sees the pit into which they will plunge. The palms they wave cannot hide from his eyes the vultures¹ that are gathering above them. In his ears plainly indicated by the request of the Pharisees (Luke xix, 39). It is also implied by the facts upon which the judgment of that Council over which Caiaphas presided must have been based. The hosannas were incipient war-cries.

¹ Matt. xxiv, 28, Luke xvii, 37, mistranslated "eagles." Luke xix, 39, 40, "And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." He rode the colt to proclaim himself the Messiah. It was because his disciples recognized in him the Messiah as he meant them to that the Pharisees wished him to silence them. Therefore he refused to do so. But though the disciples understood only one half of the lesson he meant the colt to teach them, there was still hope that they might learn the other half, namely, that the Messiah was the opposite of what they supposed.

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the hosannas are drowned by the flapping of carrion wings. Therefore it was that when he drew nigh and beheld the city he wept over it, because he could not make it understand the things belonging to peace.

CHAPTER III

NOTHING BUT LEAVES

THE manner of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem, while it said unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth," proclaimed with equal emphasis the advent of him "that publisheth peace." It allayed the suspicions of the Romans and quieted the anxieties of Pilate. But it did not annihilate the false hopes of the Twelve or banish the illusions of the populace. In both Galileans and Judæans it strengthened the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah, without correcting their misconception of the Messiah's character and aims. Neither the pageant so carefully arranged to rectify their misconception nor the Saviour's grief upon its failure availed to teach them the truth.

It is not strange that the Twelve missed his meaning. Men are always more deeply impressed by power than by purpose. There are few things harder than to convince them that one who *can* do, *will not* do, what they would do if they could, and the Twelve believed the

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Master able to do whatever he desired. Then too it must not be forgotten how often they had failed to understand when he told them in plain words what "the colt the foal of an ass" repeated only in symbol.

The subsequent behavior of the multitude makes it probable that through ignorance of the Saviour's character, they mistook his peaceful profession for a disguise adopted to deceive the Romans. Such tricks were practiced more than once by Galilean conspirators. It was not many years after this that those Galilean zealots who flooded the temple floor with blood gained admission to its inner sanctuary by hiding their daggers under festal robes.

However this may be, it was not until two days later that the eyes of the disciples were opened to the truth. The people did not see it until compelled to do so by the subsequent conduct of Christ. When the disciples discovered their mistake they lost heart. When the people discovered theirs they turned against Christ in fury.

The Pharisees saw clearly the fact which caused our Lord's distress, for in view of the demonstration which inspired it they said: "Lo, the world is gone after him."

It was true. That world which scorns its Marys and anoints its Cæsars; that world which knew him not and when it came to know him a little hated him because its prince had nothing in him; that world whence he told Pilate his kingdom was not; that world whose cherished maxims are the categorical contradictions of his beatitudes; that world which, when his disciples imitate their Master, hates them because they also are not of it; that world which is still the arch hindrance to the coming of the kingdom for which we pray; that world which he came to deliver from its vile self, had for a moment mistaken him for one of its cheap idols, and therefore had gone after him long enough to shout those hosannas which the instant it discovered the blunder changed into the yell, "Crucify him! Crucify him!"

Therefore his tears. They were shed for that world. The vision which caused them was not of the cross to which it nailed him, but of its own desolated homes and slaughtered children.

After pausing on the crest that overlooks the city long enough to voice his grief, "he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it

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being now eventide, he went out unto Bethany with the Twelve."

One of the "all things round about" was a Roman garrison within the sacred precincts. He probably saw also armed soldiers marching or idling upon the holy ground. Those were the sights which made the world that had "gone after him" gnash its teeth. From such abominations the Galileans who had infected Jerusalem with their expectations looked to him for deliverance.

These objects drew from him no indication even of displeasure. But there were things in conspicuous view which kindled in him an indignation that helps us to conceive what it was in John's inspired vision that made the rulers and kings of the earth call upon the mountains to fall and cover them from the wrath of the Lamb. What those things were and what he thought of them the next day declared in trumpet tones.

On the morning of that next day he returned to the city with the Twelve. It seems that he left Bethany before the morning meal, which was usually served about ten or eleven o'clock. I think he did so to make hunger enforce the lesson he intended to teach. It was

a lesson of immense importance, and went far toward accomplishing what his repeated statements and the dramatic appeal to the prophecy of Zechariah had not achieved.

We have seen how persistently the Twelve had refused to see in the cross the throne of the kingdom they were in training to proclaim. Even the Lord's lamentation had not led them to suspect that the men who shouted "hosanna" before him would despise and reject him as soon as they came to understand him. With pulses still beating time to the palms and pæans, the Twelve were returning to Jerusalem. Their anticipations were as jubilant as they were groundless when the Saviour led them to a fig tree that grew by the wayside. It was covered with leaves. The leaves promised fruit. "He came, if haply he might find anything thereon." That must have surprised them, "for," as they knew, it was not "the season of figs." "And he answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit from thee henceforward, for ever. And his disciples heard it."¹

Why that last clause? Of course they heard. Yet the statement is emphatic. It implies that in the writer's opinion their hearing it was an

¹ Mark xi, 12-14. He answered the disciples' surprise.

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important fact, and that they heard without understanding.

“It” — the Master’s word — was the conclusion of an acted but unspoken parable, and they had never been quick to understand even spoken ones.¹ His action was an accurate reflection of their inmost selves. He hungered for something that was not on the tree. Yet like one deceived by deluding appearances he approached it *as if he expected to find what he and they knew was not there*. Just so they, really deceived by the palms and the hosannas, were going to Jerusalem with the expectation of finding something for which they hungered, but which, if they had believed him as Mary believed him, they would have known Jerusalem did not contain.

To make the parable more significant and more easily understood he repeated to the fig tree precisely what his lamentation had said to those who waved the palms and shouted the pæans, and thus made it tell those who “heard,” that Jerusalem would never fulfill the hopes inspired in them by her behavior the day before.

The explanatory statement “his disciples heard it” implies that until the incident was com-

¹ Mark iv, 13, and *passim*.

pleted the next morning, they did not fully grasp its significance, but went on to the city vaguely depressed, yet still hoping for what was not to be. When, however, they again saw the fig tree, they had passed through an experience which made their own blighted expectations an adequate interpreter of its withered leaves. Obstacles had come to view which seemed to them a mountain barring insuperably the way of all that even their Lord desired. Then he taught them a very different lesson. He told them that as yesterday they had been foolishly elated because they did not believe him, to-day they were for the same reason as foolishly despondent. He bade them do what they had not done; namely, believe him, and all would be well. "Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain [the mountain of their fears], Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, it shall be done."

In view of all that occurred, from the time they left Galilee till they stood beneath the fig tree the burden of the Master's instructions to the Twelve was: "Let not your heart be elated. Believe in God. Believe also in me." From the hour they left the fig tree to his last cry upon the

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cross the burden of his teachings to them was: "Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me." That fact is most significant.

Leaving the fig tree still covered with its deluding foliage, the little company returned to the city and entered the Royal Porch. This was the south boundary of the temple inclosure. It was formed by three continuous colonnades about a thousand feet in length, running east and west. Of these the central one, forty-five feet broad, was included between two rows of huge white marble columns. The columns, a hundred feet high, supported a roof of cedar. On each side of this central one, at distances of thirty feet, rows of similar pillars, half as high, formed a second and a third colonnade; one on the north, the other on the south. These also were roofed with cedar. All three were paved with variegated marbles.

The Royal Porch was used for both business and social and to some extent for religious purposes. It was to Jerusalem what the Agora was to Athens, the Forum to Rome, the Rialto to Venice. Here friends met, merchants bargained, and idlers came to hear the news. A part of the structure was reserved for the uses of devotion. Along the eastern side of the temple square ran

another colonnade, inferior in grandeur to the Royal Porch, but magnificent. It was called "Solomon's Porch." North of the Royal Porch, about two thirds of the distance between it and the north limit of the square, were the buildings of the temple itself. These were conspicuous, for the whole inclosure was dome-shaped and they stood upon its crest. They were fenced in by a balustrade of carved white marble, beyond which Gentiles were forbidden on penalty of death to pass. The whole space between the Royal Porch and this balustrade was called "the Court of the Gentiles," because to the Gentiles it was free.

This bird's-eye view is needful for the right understanding of what follows.

In the Court of the Gentiles a practice had been adopted and approved which was helpful to all worshipers, but especially so to strangers. It was preëminently useful at passover times. Here doves were kept for the convenience of those who needed to buy them for sacrifice ; such animals also as were required for the same purpose. Both doves and beasts must be taken into the buildings beyond the balustrade and there slain by priests before they could be offered. Jews from distant lands needed also to cash their

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bills and to exchange their foreign currency for shekels of the sanctuary, which in certain cases were the only money that could be lawfully accepted in the temple. There was nothing to shock the sensibilities of the devoutest Jew in the sight of doves, sheep, oxen, and tables of money-changers in this Court of the Gentiles. All the things presented here had to be used within the sacred buildings themselves. Their presence in the outer court was no more startling to an Israelite than Bibles and hymn books in the vestibule of a church would be to us. Least of all would he who cared so little for the washing of cups and platters and so much that the Sabbath should be used for the benefit of man, for whom it was made, have been offended by these arrangements which contributed to human comfort and convenience, and, by facilitating the purposes for which worshipers visited the temple, helped to make his Father's house "a house of prayer."

Yet when he entered the Royal Porch and looked into the open space beyond it, he showed an indignation at what was going on there such as we have reason to believe no other sight ever kindled in his soul. He overthrew the tables of the money-changers and drove out the traffickers as one would sweep vermin from

the portrait of his mother, if he knew the vermin were intelligent enough to understand what they were doing.

What was it that offended him so much? His own words tell us: "Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."

That was an accurate statement of fact.

The sons of Annas, who had been legally the High Priest and was still the power behind the throne, held concessions which gave them a monopoly of all the business transacted in that place. They received the rentals of the stalls and booths placed there for traders and money-changers. To what extent they shared the profits of the extortions levied there cannot now be known precisely. But the extortions were prodigious and notorious, and they fell most heavily upon the poor. Usurious charges were exacted by the money-changers. The price of pigeons was raised to a sum almost incredible. Cattle could not be accepted for sacrifice until they had been passed upon by a licensed inspector. For inspecting them a small price was fixed by law. Annas had juggled the inspector's office into the hands of his sons. It was diffi-

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cult—for many it was practically impossible—to procure cattle properly inspected except through his agents, and the legal requirements were easily evaded. There is reason to believe that the same priestly conspiracy headed by Annas had brought about at this very passover what we should call “a corner” in lambs, by which the price of them was greatly enhanced. The Court of the Gentiles had thus been made all and worse than all that gamblers with loaded dice have ever made Wall Street. Against its extortions the people were helpless. Indignant protests from honest ecclesiastics were not wanting. When the grandson of Hillel learned that doves were selling at about four dollars a brace, he declared he would not sleep till he had changed that, and he worked so effectively that before sunset they fell to about four cents apiece.¹

The popular indignation against these infamous monopolies had become a factor to be seriously reckoned with by those who practiced or protected them. The people were in sympathy with every attempt to abolish them. But the guilty parties, when they knew of Christ's

¹ Derenbourg, *Histoire de Palestine*, 467; Josephus, *Antiquities*, xx, 9. 2.

cleansing the temple, "sought how they might destroy him."¹

It was the attack upon his pocket that raised the malignant fury of Annas. When, appealing to the bigotry of his associates, the High Priest rent his garment and cried, "What further need have we of witnesses?" his rending fingers were the clutching claws of avarice. His cry of feigned horror echoed the sordid voice of his predatory father-in-law.

Probably the cleansing of the temple was more effective than any other thing Jesus ever did, in stimulating the efforts of the ruling priesthood to put him out of their way, while more than anything else it embarrassed them in trying to do so, for it compelled them to devise artful and difficult schemes to conceal their real motives from the people whom he had made it harder for them to plunder. In saying, "Ye have made my house a den of thieves," Christ only articulated distinctly and proclaimed boldly a fact which all were muttering and no one else had dared to speak aloud.

I have dwelt so long upon this incident for two reasons.

1. If, as many fancy, Christ's wrath had been

¹ Mark xi, 18.

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roused by the intrusion of what we call "secular business" upon sacred ground, his example would have contradicted his precepts. He recognized nothing as secular in our sense of that word. We mean by it things done when God is not looking, or things about which he does not care, or times and places which men have not labeled with his name. But Christ declared that God was always looking; that there was nothing about which he did not care; and that he was a spirit, to be worshiped not only in the temple at Jerusalem or on the Mountain of Samaria, but at all times and in all places: in the store as in the church; on Mondays as on Sundays. No utterance came from the Saviour's lips more distinct or more emphatic than this: "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." And no utterance of his is there greater need of keeping in mind, for to serve God and Mammon is precisely what the vast majority of professing Christians are at this time trying to do.¹

¹ "First, have you observed that all Christ's main teachings, by direct order, by earnest parables, and by his own permanent emotion, regard the use and misuse of money? We might have thought, if we had been asked what a divine teacher was most likely to teach, that he would have left inferior persons to give directions about money; and himself

2. The practical denial of the fact that there is nothing secular, as we understand the word, has been an immensely potent hindrance to the coming of the kingdom. The hucksters had

spoken only concerning faith and love and the discipline of the passions, and the guilt of the crimes of soul against soul. But not so. He speaks in general terms of these. But he does not speak parables about them for all men's memory, nor permit himself fierce indignation against them, in all men's sight. The Pharisees bring him an adulteress. He writes her forgiveness on the dust of which he had formed her. Another, despised of all for known sin, he recognized as a giver of unknown love. But he acknowledges no love in buyers and sellers in his house. One should have thought there were people in that house twenty times worse than they ;—Caia-phas and his like—false priests, false prayer-makers, false leaders of the people—who needed putting to flight with darkest wrath. But the scourge is only against the traffickers and thieves. The two most intense of all the parables, the two which lead the rest in love and terror (this of the Prodigal and of Dives) relate, both of them, to management of riches. The practical order given to the only seeker of advice of whom it is recorded that Christ 'loved him,' is briefly about his property : 'Sell that thou hast.'

“ And the arbitrament of the day of Last Judgment is made to rest wholly, neither on belief in God, nor in any spiritual virtue in man, nor in freedom from stress of stormy crime, but on this only, 'I was an hungered and ye gave me drink ; naked, and ye clothed me ; sick, and ye came unto me.' ”
—Ruskin, *Time and Tide*, Letter 25.

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perverted the lovely because helpful purposes for which they had been put in the Court of the Gentiles, to foul because wholly selfish uses. Therefore Christ treated them as he treats us when in the same way we debase the beautiful services of commerce and trade. His driving out the sellers of doves and the money-changers was only a quick, sharp, conspicuous specimen of what he does, in ways less obvious, to all commercial peoples who, instead of making stock boards and boards of trade houses of prayer, degrade them into dens of thieves. Something like this he does in Wall Street every decade or two. But those who feel and obey the scourge of small cords rarely perceive who wields it, because they have not studied his gospel enough to recognize him by his ways.¹

Immediately upon this fearful exhibition of our Saviour's wrath followed one of the tenderest scenes recorded of him. You would expect the weak and the helpless to shrink appalled from the indignation which had terrified the strong and paralyzed the masterful. But the

¹ Those who find it impossible to believe that Christ *twice* drove the rascals from their plunder before he died for them might find it easy to credit if they noticed how often he has done the same thing since.

wrath of the Lamb is not like the wrath of the tiger. It is an ocean which shatters ironclads by surges which only rock the cradle of the nautilus. The verse next after that which reports the thunder, "Ye make it a den of thieves," tells us "the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them." And the children too cried "Hosanna!"

As he stood among the lame he had made to walk and the blind he had made to see, surrounded by children, the Scribes and Pharisees came hurrying down the marble descent from the temple, where they had been studying the Scriptures and learning only how to pervert their meaning, and began to rebuke him. They did not venture an objection to his scattering the nest of plunderers with whom some — probably a majority — of them were in collusion, but they tried to frighten the parents by hinting that the children's shouts might excite the suspicion of the Romans. When they found Christ standing — I doubt not — with little children in his arms, children clasping his knees, peering into his face, clinging to his mantle; children crowding to get near him, and those who could not shouting their welcome, the rebukers exclaimed: "Hearest thou what these

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are saying?" And the Master answered: "Yea: did ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" They knew the eighth Psalm well enough to supply the rest: "because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger," or more accurately, "to silence the foe and the revengeful." They understood and were dumb.

Then he arose and went with his disciples to spend yet another night in the house at Bethany.

CHAPTER IV

THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL

THE occurrences of Tuesday leave no doubt in my mind that on the preceding night, which the Master spent with his friends at Bethany, a caucus was held in Jerusalem by a coalition of his foes. Those foes were the leaders of the three mutually hostile factions known as Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herodians. Each of these parties hated the other two because the success of either of them endangered its own existence. Their animosities were not of recent origin, and had more than once given rise to conflicts ending in murder. But each discerned in Christ an enemy more formidable than it had found in any faction, and fear forced them to sink their reciprocal antipathies in a combination against him.

Of the Herodians little is known, but we may safely infer that they were controlled by politicians who schemed to bring all the territory which Herod the Great had ruled under the sovereignty of one of his descendants. This was

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ultimately accomplished in the reign of Claudius. It is probably because the Herodians, like all politicians who are politicians only, worked in the dark, that we know so little about them.

The Sadducees dominated and largely composed the Jewish aristocracy of wealth and culture. They were not averse to the luxury and laxity of Rome, and having no belief in a future life showed in their behavior the natural fruits of their creed. The orthodox regarded them much as the theological legatees of the Puritans regarded the disciples of Thomas Paine. Though they stood for the letter of the Mosaic Code, held the chief ecclesiastical offices, and probably controlled a majority of votes in the Sanhedrin, they can be credited no more than the Herodians with either patriotism or religion. Those of their number who entered the coalition were inspired by motives wholly disconnected with either of those passions. They were the men who held the monopolies which made the house of God a "den of thieves." The expulsion of the hucksters threatened to dry up the sources of their gains, and the "whip of small cords" which drove the sellers of doves out of the temple drove their protectors into the coalition.

The Pharisees were the party of greatest influence with the people. The mainspring of their conduct was spiritual pride. Their own bigotry was the cloak in which they hid it from the common view and concealed it even from themselves. The bigotry of their dupes was the arsenal which supplied the weapons of their warfare. Our Lord's arraignment of them justifies the inference that they were hypocrites, though it must not be forgotten that his words were addressed to a comparatively small portion of their class. But their hypocrisy was so complete that, as has been said, it deceived themselves, and therefore exerted much of the influence gained by sincerity. A fanatical devotion to ceremonial and semi-ascetic practices won for them from the populace that superstitious reverence which, as the history of Christianity no less than that of Islam shows, such "will-worship"¹ easily secures. They detested Rome and abhorred the memory of Herod.

The Sadducees counted the Pharisees bigots and boors. The Pharisees saw in the Sadducees infidels and renegades. Both, it may be assumed, discerned in the Herodians subtle and adroit obstacles to their own ambitions, while for the

¹ Col. ii, 23.

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Herodians to get what they desired it was essential to undermine the influence of the Sadducees with Rome and of the Pharisees with Jerusalem. To their combination against Christ the Pharisees were driven by spiritual pride, the Herodians by political ambition, the Sadducees by insatiable greed. Their coöperation might be miniaturized by imagining Peter the Hermit, Aaron Burr, and — some oil, railroad, or other monopolist of the present day, joining hands to abolish Washington.

Bitterly as these factions hated each other, they hated Christ more. The Herodians were adroit and practiced politicians. They alone had entirely understood the meaning of the "colt, the foal of an ass," and therefore feared that he who came riding upon it might thwart their plans by reconciling the people to the Roman procuratorship. The hosannas had made the Pharisees tremble for their religious supremacy. The whip of small cords had set the Sadducees quaking for the sources of their predatory wealth. All three saw clearly that the people were with the man who had terrified them. Thus ambition, pride, and greed, the three strongest powers of that world whence his kingdom "was not," were arrayed against the Sav-

iour in a coalition which felt the necessity of promptly destroying him, but saw clearly that to attempt it before they had undermined his popularity would insure their own discomfiture.¹

There was every reason to expect that the next day he would reappear in the temple. They knew the crowd would be on hand. They agreed upon a plan to discredit him publicly then and there. The plan was cunningly devised, but it increased the popularity it was intended to destroy, and discredited only its projectors.

“Blindly the wicked work the righteous will of heaven.”²

Tuesday morning, after stopping at the fig tree long enough to complete the lesson he had begun the day before, Christ entered the Royal Porch. The multitudes who had seen him drive out the hucksters were waiting for him. Partisans of each of the three factions were doubtless in attendance.

It is probable that he had crossed the colonnades of the Royal Porch and entered the Court of the Gentiles, whence the hucksters had been driven, when a deputation from the Sanhedrin

¹ Mark xiv, 2 ; Matt. xxvi, 3-5.

² Southey's paraphrase of “He that diggeth a pit shall fall therein.”

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appeared. The crowd divides to make way for its approach. Within the space thus cleared, ringed by an eagerly expectant throng, Christ and the Pharisees stand face to face.¹

The Twelve are sheltered behind the Master. His dress, though simple, is of fine material. A strip of white linen is bound above his forehead so that the ends fall back upon his shoulders. A loose garment of striped woolen with sleeves, woven without a seam and caught about the waist by a broad girdle, descends nearly to his feet, which stand in sandals. A long shawl is draped across his breast and over his left shoulder in such fashion that its two fringed ends, falling at unequal length behind his person, show at each of the four corners a knot of blue ribbon like that

¹ An inference from these premises: the coöperation of the three factions points toward a programme previously arranged. I believe it was substantially agreed upon the night before. That the embassy sent to question Christ's authority was composed of both Pharisees and Sadducees is evident from Mark xi, 27; Matt. xxi, 23; and Luke xx, 1. Mark xii, 13 and Matt. xxii, 15, 16 indicate that the Herodians were at hand. From Matt. xxi, 45, 46 the inference is inevitable that the question concerning authority was put by the Pharisees and that the Herodians were silent until — to cover their confusion — the baffled Pharisees called on them for help. Last of all the Sadducees spoke.

which the afflicted woman touched when "immediately the issue of her blood was stanchèd." He wears no badge of authority, no emblem of official dignity, and is clad as any self-respecting Jew of his time might be.¹ He waits to be addressed.

The delegation before him is composed of men clothed by the popular imagination in a reverence no less profound than that felt by mediæval Europe for the Pope and his emissaries. All of them have reached and most of them have passed middle age. Every one of them is well known in the city, and some of them throughout the Jewish world. Close-fitting caps edged in front with rolls of black leather shadow their foreheads like visors. These contain parchments inscribed in sacred ink with scripture texts. Their arms are girt with leather lacings threaded with gold or silver, which bind to wrist or middle finger small metal boxes in which similar parchments are inclosed. These phylacteries and the exaggerated breadth of their mantle fringes ostentatiously proclaim their piety and distinguish them as the holy men of Israel, the guardians appointed to protect the purity of her religion.

¹ That, as Schürer thinks, Christ wore phylacteries is to me simply incredible.

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Before a few friends of whom nobody knows anything except that they are Galileans, and perhaps—since such news travels fast—that one of them belongs to that disreputable class, the publicans, stands in majestic simplicity the Carpenter of Nazareth. He has no sign of authority that is not in himself. From other men he is distinguished only by his looks and bearing. Yet he claims to be that Messiah for whom the ages have waited; the Lord of the temple and all within its walls; the lawful sovereign of the nation and the world. Can he vindicate the claim?

Before him, in all the dignity of recognized authority, are the religious rulers, the only rulers the Jews revere. They are members of that august body whose duty it is to protect the people from the machinations of false prophets by examining the credentials of religious teachers and appraising their validity. They are here for that purpose. They bar the way to that inner temple which the Galilean means this day to enter as his own because it is his Father's house. Will the Carpenter blench?

“By what authority doest thou these things?”

All know what the question means; for the hosannas of Sunday still ring in their ears, and

the hucksters who fled yesterday have not returned. Calm as sunlight and as piercing was the reply: —

“I will ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven or from men? Answer *me*.”¹

It was the duty of these inquisitors to decide upon the nature of John's baptism. An acknowledgment that they had not done so would be the confession of a delinquency by which they forfeited the right to question claims which John had endorsed. They might not pass the first case on the docket to take up the second, which was one of its branches. Therefore that “Answer me” smote them with paralysis. They conferred in whispers, but could find no escape from the dilemma. If they should say, “John's baptism was from heaven,” they knew the reply would be, “John baptized me,” for all knew what had occurred at Jordan. But they dared not say, “From men,” for all knew better. The sole alternative remaining was humiliating, but they had to take it. They replied: “We do not know.” It was a renunciation of the right to

¹ I venture the italics to show how the Master took the authority they assumed.

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question him. Therefore the "Neither tell I *you* by what authority I do these things."

I have italicized that "*you*" to remind the reader that our Lord's refusal to answer the Pharisees was not caused by the nature of their question, but by the characters of the questioners. Their *question* he was swift to answer, but he would not answer *them*. For, leaving them baffled, perplexed, and partially discredited, he completed their discomfiture by turning to the people and, in two parables addressed to *them*, explaining both the source of his authority and the cause of his refusal.

The story of the two brothers expanded the question which had just silenced the arrogant inquisitors, and declared that in their treatment of both the Baptist and himself the publicans and harlots had proved themselves more obedient to God than these religious leaders who pretended to be God's faithful servants.¹

The second parable,² that of the traitor husbandmen, described the impious usurpation of these same recreant ministers, who, appointed by God to cultivate his vineyard and render him its fruits, had appropriated all for themselves, had rejected and slain the messengers

¹ Matt. xxi, 28-32.

² Matt. xxi, 33, 44.

sent to them, and when at last the owner sent his son — did he not point to himself when he said that? — had begun scheming to kill, and, in spite of the set-back they had just received, would succeed in killing him.

The Pharisees could only gnash their teeth. Their fury was impotent. The Herodians hastened to their rescue. Consider a moment the vantage ground they occupied.

The Jews were the fiercest of patriots. The passover was their Independence Day, and the eagles flaunted in their capitol. If you would breathe the air of Jerusalem at that time, read Carlyle's description of the Carmagnole.

Seeing the Saviour between the Scylla of Jewish fanaticism and the Charybdis of Roman power, the Herodians expect an easy victory. That word "authority" is their cue. They mean to base their attack not on pious fancies, but on stubborn facts. Yonder, in plain sight, only a few hundred feet away, dominating the whole sacred enclosure, frowns Antonia fortress. Roman soldiers are there. They will see to it that what Cæsar decrees shall be done. If the emperor appoints a Herod to rule over Jerusalem, as a few years later an emperor did, the imperial fiat will have to be obeyed. Here is the

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real source of authority, the Herodians think. But woe be to him who then and there asserts it.

“Teacher,” — how suave a wily politician can be when he sees an army that will back him! — “Teacher, we know that thou art true, and carest not for any one; for thou regardest not the person of men, but of a truth teachest the way of God.” All of this is an approving reference to the treatment the Pharisees have just received, a politician’s trick to placate the people and to gratify his own smothered malice. “Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give?”¹

If Christ answers “Yes!” they are sure it will ruin him with the people. If “No!” there are the soldiers. For utterances less seditious than that Pilate has more than once made blood flow.

But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them: “Why tempt *ye* me?”²

He did not ask either the Pharisees or the Sadducees that question. It fastened attention upon the glaring inconsistency of these apo-

¹ Mark xii, 14, 15, R. V., Margin.

² Again I venture the italics. The Greek grammar does not demand them, but the context does. Mark xii, 15, A. V.

state politicians who had no religious standing, were known to have no interest in religion, and yet came to him, a religious teacher, for instruction in their religious duties, addressing him as "Teacher" in that sphere. It reminded all that these politicians who had trampled upon the Messianic hopes of the nation were the unfittest men in the world to be asking advice of a prophet who represented those hopes. It was Satan asking how to pray.

He called for a penny; pointed to Cæsar's head upon it, and said, "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."

Then, we are told, they " marvelled greatly." Well they might. The reply struck home with crushing force. It pinned them to popular contempt as the collector pins the beetle to the board. For the Herods had tried to domesticate the Roman games in Jerusalem and to introduce Roman practices there in defiance of Jehovah's commandment. More than by anything else, more than by all things else combined, had the people been infuriated by that ostentatious refusal of the Herods to "*render unto God the things that are God's.*" Of that the Lord's reply made all think, and all but the

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Herodians thought of it as the Huguenots thought of St. Bartholomew. They had planned to "catch him in his talk" and so discredit him. Well might they marvel when they saw him write their own names in the blank they had left for his. There was nothing left for them but flight.

But the Sadducees have still an arrow in their quiver. They think to conquer by pure reason. They ask which one of seven brothers, who in obedience to a law of Moses had married the same woman, shall be her husband in the future life.

I think this question touched a chord in the Saviour which neither Herodian nor Pharisee could reach. He showed the Sadducees a consideration — I had almost written a sympathy — which seems to imply that he counted them less guilty than the other agents of the coalition. He did not charge them with hypocrisy, only with error. Neither in the terrific arraignment which followed soon after did he include them. His reply to them was the correction of a blunder, rather than the rebuke of a sin. He told them why they were wrong, and tried to set them right. I think the reason was this: —

The worldliness and evil-doing of the Sad-

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ducees were the outgrowths of their disbelief in the future life. "Let us eat and drink" is the inevitable sequence of the conviction "tomorrow we die." In holding that doctrine men may be entirely sincere. Yet, not only is its moral effect disastrous, but it blots every star from the sky in those times of bereavement which come to us all.

The pathos of such a mental state appealed, I think, powerfully to him "who brought life and immortality to light." Whatever reason may be given for Christ's treatment of the Sadducees on this occasion, it demands and will amply repay the closest scrutiny.

He assumed that they were mistaken. But he did not provoke antagonism by bluntly telling them so. He adopted the most persuasive way of winning a hearing for the refutation of a fallacy from one who holds it honestly and earnestly. "It is not so!" makes an opponent bristle. "Is it not so?" tends to make him think. So Christ asked the question: "Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God?"¹

Having opened their hearts and ears to what he meant to say, he addressed to them the

¹ Mark xii, 24, R. V.

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only argument he ever made to prove existence beyond the grave. It is also, I believe, the only argument — save that based upon Christ's simple assertion — that has ever helped appreciably any one who had lost faith in a hereafter, when hopelessly groping for "the touch of a vanished hand."

It was the argument drawn from the persistence of the affections. When our dear ones die we do not cease to love them. We love them more than ever. Upon this fact Buckle based the only reasoning which enabled him to believe in a conscious future. With the same key Tennyson freed himself and many another from the dungeon of Doubting Castle. By the same consideration before he drank the hemlock Socrates comforted Cebes. "Tell him," wrote Lincoln when his father lay near death, "that if it is his lot to go now, he will soon have a joyous meeting with those who have gone before." Confidence in what the persistence of love implies elicited from David ¹ the only articulate confession of faith in the world to come that I can find in the Old Testament, and the words recorded in the New, spoken to comfort supreme affection in supreme bereavement are, "Let not

¹ 2 Sam. xii, 23.

your heart be troubled — I will come again and will receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.”

The final argument used by Paul to convince the Corinthians that at death they should not cease to be was drawn from the same source.¹

This, which, I repeat, seems to me the only consideration that has been of much avail in carrying conviction to those who never heard or cannot believe the unsupported statement of Christ, was the foundation of the argument addressed to the Sadducees. God said to Moses : “ I am the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of

¹ 1 Cor. xv, 29, baptized for the dead. Paul’s argument is this : —

The universal instincts of humanity are implanted by God. They are index fingers which do not point to fiction, but to fact. The longing for reunion is universal. Some of you it has led into the fold of Christ. Assurance that Christians shall meet each other after death has brought them to accept baptism (the sign of conversion). Why are they baptized over their dead ? That is, why does the death of dear ones lead to conversion ? The answer is plain. If we cannot trust these finest instincts of humanity, there is nothing we can trust. All is vanity.

Who has not observed the fact on which Paul based his argument ? Who has not seen one at least brought to Christ and into the church by influences which began in the desolation and the longing wrought by bereavement ?

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Jacob." The force of the reasoning lies in the word "God." Would any human parent worthy of the name blot his child out of existence? The being he had begotten, cherished, and rejoiced in? Would he not keep him alive if he could? Is God's love feebler and less stable than the affections of those whom he has taught to be fathers and mothers? No! He is the God of the living, not of the dead! It is possible to disbelieve in the continued existence of God's children only by limiting his power. "Is it not because ye know not the scriptures, nor the power of God?"

Among those who heard the Saviour how many there were who received his words into an "honest and good heart" we are not told. The parable of the marriage feast and the wedding garment, apparently spoken at this time, and the subsequent behavior of the people, imply that there were not enough of such to leaven the mass. Probably the majority applauded because they interpreted his utterances as endorsements of the expectations which inspired the hosannas of Sunday. There was, however, one listener to whom he said: "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God."¹ That man was a

¹ Mark xii, 34.

"Scribe." His life had been devoted to the study of "Moses and the prophets" and the conclusions drawn from them by Rabbinical debate. Though many of his class held the views of the Pharisees, that was not the case with them all. This man was probably a Sadducee. He saw that Christ's deduction from the Scripture was true. It shattered the foundations of his creed. Convinced by the argument, he questioned Christ further, not to "entangle him in his talk," but to get more light, and received the reply he must have expected.

"What commandment is the first of all?"

"Jesus answered," expanding the passage he had quoted already, "The first is, Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."¹ The Scribe saw at once that if the reply given to the Sadducees were true, this in-

¹ Mark xii, 28ff, R. V.

Matthew adds the statement which the revisers have rejected from Mark, but which the context almost demands, "the second is like unto it."

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evitably followed. He said so in a way that found response in every heart. "And no man after that durst ask him any question." That is, there followed some moments of expectant silence. What will the prophet do? Will he speak again? His assailants are still before him. But they are conquered, discredited, abashed. He is the undisputed Master now. In the citadel of their pride he has met and mastered them by sheer moral force. He has fettered them by chains of their own forging, in a silence they dare not break. Will he leave them so? Every sound is hushed, every eye is strained, every ear is alert while he looks round about him.

There are speakers who possess the power — George MacDonald had it in a high degree — of making every person in an audience feel that their eyes are fixed on him alone. Turning toward those Pharisees who had come to demand his credentials, and who, humiliated by their defeat, had remained to see how the Herodians and Sadducees would fare; passing unnoticed the Herodians, who made no pretense of piety; passing the Sadducees, who had small influence with the people; and riveting his gaze upon the Pharisees (who were the peo-

ple's trusted leaders) and the Scribes their attorneys, he asked them a question which must have redoubled their mortification. They have tried their best to prove the falsity of his claim to the Messiahship, but have succeeded only in helping to confirm the general belief in its validity. Everything since their attack began has worked so powerfully toward the same conclusion that they dare not openly dispute it, and it is virtually endorsed by their silence.

Such was their condition when by an imperative question our Lord compelled them to break cover.

“What think ye of the Christ? [Messiah.] Whose Son is he?”

That forced them to say whether they would recognize the Messiah in such a one as he had shown himself to be. It required them to state the conclusions to which their investigations concerning the authority by which he did “these things” had brought them; to declare publicly whether or not he was the Messiah.

With dogged determination not to yield a point, they paid no heed to the first and most important part of the question, and replied to the last part of it by quoting the appellation by which the Messiah was popularly described.

They said: "He is the Son of David." It was a cunning move. It was calculated to fan the hopes of military conquest and earthly grandeur already kindled in the public mind. They knew well that the people almost without exception expected the "Son of David" to deliver them from Rome and establish a kingdom like that of Jesse's son. They thought, therefore, it would be easy to convince them that the man before them could not be the Messiah, by drawing attention to the conspicuous, the antipodal difference between him and the conqueror of Goliath. Yes, it was a cunning move. But a breath blew away the spider's web.

"How then doth David in the spirit call him Lord?" If that were all; if David expected a Messiah born of one no greater than himself; a mere man with no authority more commanding than that of harp and sword, how could David worship him? There was no answering that. "Neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions." ¹

Turning from the baffled and silenced Pharisees to the people who had trusted them, our Lord described the cruelty, the selfishness, the ambitions, the arrogance of those usurping hypo-

¹ Matt. xxii, 46.

crites, in a portraiture which has made their name continue to this day a synonym for what is most odious in character. When he had thus presented them to those they had deluded and oppressed, he faced them again and poured upon them those appalling denunciations the like of which this earth has never heard, ending the arraignment with the fearful apostrophe: "Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?"

Then, assuming all the authority that had ever been attributed to the Messiah, speaking as no one could speak without claiming as his right the obedience due to God alone, he exclaimed: "Behold, I send unto you prophets and wise men and scribes," and gave voice to the "long-suffering" God in the soliloquy: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."¹

¹ Matt. xxiii, 37-39, R. V.

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When he had thus spoken he crossed the open Court of the Gentiles, entered as its acknowledged Messiah the temple itself, and no man durst bar his way or dispute his authority.

CHAPTER V

THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS RISING

“AND the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” (Is. lx, 3.)

“A light to the Gentiles.” (Is. xlix, 6.)

The attempt to undermine Christ's favor with the people had proved an ignominious failure. It had brought contempt upon those who made it, and confirmed the convictions it was intended to destroy. Pharisees, Herodians, and Sadducees had fallen into the pit they had digged. The denunciations brought upon the Pharisees by their own cunning had for the moment at least swept aside the mist of superstitious reverence which concealed their real characters. No weapon aimed at the object of their hate had prospered. Every blow descending upon him had paralyzed the arm that dealt it, or shorn off some misconception that obscured his brightness. The effect of all this upon a small group of strangers who have not yet been mentioned will soon appear. Its influence upon others in

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the temple is already obvious. The people recognized his authority, and their rulers dared no longer challenge it. For when as the acknowledged Messiah, who had proved his right to purify the temple and call to judgment its most influential ministers, he crossed the court whence he had driven the hucksters, passed through the Gate Beautiful and the Court of the Women, ascended into the Court of Israel, which overlooked it, and sat down in the most conspicuous place within the sacred precincts, no word was spoken, no gesture made to hinder or to check his progress.

The Court of the Women was a space two hundred feet square, open to the sky, paved with marble and enclosed on the north, east, and south by colonnades, outside of which on the north and south ran a continuous line of white marble structures used for various purposes. The Gate Beautiful bisected its eastern boundary and faced a flight of fifteen steps, which, on the opposite side of the square, led up to the Court of Israel.

In the last-named court the Lord sat down. The whole of the Women's Court was in his view. Along its north and south sides at regular intervals were bronze receptacles for money.

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They resembled huge trumpets standing mouth upward on flaring bases. Into them the people dropped their pecuniary offerings. Each receptacle bore an inscription stating the purpose for which its contents would be used. In making these contributions there was a peculiar temptation to display. For no one was allowed to carry his offering across the court in purse or girdle. It must be held in the hand. Perhaps the inclination of those who gave much to hold their contributions in sight suggested the words in which our Lord's rebuke of ostentatious charity was phrased: "When thou doest thine alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

On this occasion the offerers would naturally hasten to deposit their offerings, that they might be free to fix their whole attention upon him "who sat over against the treasury." He was watching them. That may have impelled "many who were rich" to "cast in much." But one poor widow — not ashamed of her poverty — cast in the smallest sum the law allowed, "two mites, which make a farthing."

The applause lavished by press and people in our day upon multi-millionaires for gifts which do not take a sardine from their tables

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or a feather from the bonnets of their wives, contrasted with the indifference which rarely even hears of the poor man who goes without his dinner because he has paid the price of it to get a breakfast for his neighbor, may serve to show us how those in the temple regarded the "rich men who cast in much" and the poor widow who cast in "two mites." Then as now the people proportioned their praise to the size of the gift. Now as then Christ regards not what is put into the box, but what is left in the purse. That fact deserves more consideration than it receives from those who think they are walking "in his steps."

What the Master said, "She hath cast in more than they all," was absolutely true. For, one may truthfully be said to do what by the inspiration and the lever of his example he moves others to do. We are correct in saying that Luther created the Protestant churches and Neri purified the Roman Catholic Church. By that test who can estimate the millions that poor widow has cast and is still casting into the treasury of God?

It may be a baseless fancy, but the way in which the Saviour drew the attention of his disciples to this woman who also did "what she

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could," suggests that he felt for her somewhat of the same admiration which he expressed when Mary anointed him for his burial.

Experience has taught me that as the Bible is the best lexicon for life, life is the best lexicon for the Bible. Reading the Gospels by that lexicon has led me to think of this widow as neither aged nor feeble, nor as one who had been always indigent. It is hard to give a very little when all know how little we give. For one who has been rich, and accustomed to the deference which wealth commands and almost invariably receives, to do so is heroic.

One of the finest deeds I have known was this. A Presbyterian elder had for many years given thousands annually to the benevolent societies of his denomination. Long accustomed to affluence, he suddenly became poor. To pay debts incurred without his knowledge by one for whose obligations he was under no shadow of legal, but for whom he felt a moral, responsibility, he sacrificed all his property and reduced himself to penury. The collecting agent for a cause to which he had for a long time given a thousand dollars every year, aware of the change in his circumstances, called upon him simply as an old friend. Of course he avoided all allusion

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to money. None was made until the agent arose to go. Then the elder — elder in more senses than one, for he was over eighty — said, with no sign of humiliation, but as one who feels “the Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away,” “You must not deny me the privilege of giving a little because I can no longer give much,” and handed the visitor a silver half-dollar. That seems to me the kind of thing Christ would call his disciples to contemplate.

Meantime certain foreigners were waiting, perhaps in the Royal Porch. It is probable that they had seen and heard the Master there and in the Court of the Gentiles. They may have followed him thence as far as they were permitted to go. That would have given them an opportunity to tell the disciples the reason of their presence, and to ask assistance in accomplishing the purpose that had brought them to Jerusalem.

From what country they came the Gospels do not say. That they were Gentiles is indicated by the fact that they are not called Hellenists, which would mean Grecian Jews, but Greeks, a term used in the New Testament as a synonym for Gentiles. From their not venturing beyond the Court of the Gentiles to present their request to the Master himself it may be inferred

that they had not submitted to those rites which would have qualified them as proselytes to pass the barrier; and therefore makes it improbable that they had been drawn to Jerusalem by religious considerations. Though we are told that "there were certain Greeks [that is, Gentiles] among those that went up to worship at the feast,"¹ the expression does not prove that they were brought by the same motives as the Jews among whom they appeared. It rather implies the reverse. Their address to Philip confirms that implication. "Sir, we would [wish to] see Jesus." That may mean, and in view of the context I think must mean, "These others have come to celebrate the passover, but *we* have come to see Jesus."

There is a tradition that can be traced back to the closing years of the second century, which says that the Abgarus or King of Edessa, being afflicted with an incurable malady, sent to Christ for relief. In harmony with this legend Eusebius in the fourth century gives the correspondence between that king and the Saviour, affirming that he copied it from the official records of the court of Edessa. The letter he attributes to Christ has been reproduced several times in England,

¹ John xii, 20, R. V.

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France, and Germany, each time as if it were a new discovery.

Though Eusebius is a high authority, there is indisputable evidence that in this matter he was imposed upon. The correspondence is spurious. The letter is a forgery. The whole story as he tells it is incredible. In his day Edessa claimed to be the city which first accepted Christianity, and the legend is supposed to have been "concocted" there to fortify the claim. There is no doubt that the letter attributed to Christ is a forgery and the narrative of Eusebius unworthy of belief.

But traditions are not "concocted." The wildest of them starts from some seed of fact. Even the silliest superstitions are not produced by spontaneous generation. No one now believes that a preacher's presence in the ship imperils an Atlantic voyage. But no one would ever have believed it, had there been no book of Jonah. Thirteen at the table would never have caused anxiety had there been no "Last Supper." If Christ had not been crucified on Friday no Englishman would have felt the need of proving that Friday was not an unlucky day, by laying a ship's keel on Friday, launching her on Friday, naming her Friday, securing a man named

Friday to command her, and sending her forth on Friday upon that voyage after starting upon which she was never heard of again.

It seems to me by no means improbable that the legend of Abgarus was the outgrowth of the incident briefly recorded by St. John. The visitors who "would see Jesus" were Gentiles and foreigners. They may well have been sent by some suffering monarch to implore the help of the miraculous healer of whose benevolence and power he had heard. It is scarcely credible that rumors of him who made the blind to see and the lame to walk and cured all manner of diseases had failed to reach Edessa. For Edessa was a city of great importance. It lay on the main line of eastern travel from Syria, only about forty miles from the principal crossing of the Euphrates. At Edessa the road from Palestine branched into the two thoroughfares leading east and southeast. Moreover, of the three Aramaic dialects spoken by Syrians, the inhabitants of Edessa used that which was the vernacular of Judæa, the language of Christ himself.

The tone of exultation imperfectly suppressed in which Philip and Andrew told our Lord that "certain Greeks" desired to see him, may well

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have been caused by the proof their statement gave, that their Master's fame had passed the boundaries of Palestine. I think the reply the brothers received shows that it was.

"The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone."¹

Those words were no "answer" to anything recorded in the text, unless it was addressed to their evident but unspoken elation. They had seen enough that day to efface for the moment the lesson of the fig tree. They see their Lord sitting as the triumphant Messiah in the stronghold of his adversaries. They have seen him overthrow them all, and now they are here to tell him that the Gentiles have come from afar to the brightness of his rising. They are sure the hour of his glory has arrived.

That it had come the Saviour assured them. But he checked instantly their baseless exultation by showing them how little they understood what his glory is.

At such a time, with such accumulating testimonies to his influence and power crowding upon him, the man has never lived from whom

¹ John xii, 23, 24, R. V.

you would not expect some responsive sign of elation such as the disciples expected from Christ. But he used the occasion only to re-enforce the lesson of the fig tree. Giving utterance to their unspoken thought, he said, "The hour *is* come, that the Son of man should be glorified." Then adds instantly, with the reduplicated emphasis of "Verily ! Verily !" that his glory is what they count ignominy : that it is pain, contempt, a felon's death. "He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me ; and where I am, there shall also my servant be : if any man serve me, him will my Father honor."

"Now is my soul troubled." What was it that troubled him? Not fear of death. The preceding utterance makes that idea incredible. Was it not the perception that these disciples who should "serve him," and whom Satan shall sift as wheat, have just shown that they are not yet fit to follow him? But saddening as that perception is, he will endure it. "What shall I say? Father, save me from this hour?" Shall he say that? No! "For this purpose came I to this hour. Father, glorify thy name." That is, make my disciples understand

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what glory is. Then came the answer, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again," — an assurance that they shall be made to understand.

We are told of three times in our Saviour's life when a voice from heaven spoke to him. On each of these occasions he seemed, to others, grasping the sceptre ; to himself, taking the cross.

At the beginning of his ministry, while the multitude waited to ratify the Baptist's endorsement of his Messiahship, a voice from heaven declared : "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."¹ But Jesus went immediately into solitude for forty days of agonizing conflict.

When his ministry in Galilee had brought the people to his feet ; when his mighty works had made Herod quake because they made him think that John had risen from the dead ; he was transfigured before three of his disciples. They saw Moses and Elias, who had come to do him reverence, and heard a voice out of heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."² But Moses and Elias talked with him concerning his decease

¹ Matt. iii, 17.

² Matt. xvii, 5.

which he should accomplish at Jerusalem, and as he led the three down from the Mountain, and the Twelve from the scene of his triumphs toward the Capital, he told them he was going there to die.

And now! The Holy City has received him with hosannas. He has driven the desecraters from the temple. He has arraigned the chiefs of the church and the rulers of the nation in the citadel of their pride and power, and condemned them without appeal. He has announced himself publicly as the long-expected Messiah, and been welcomed as such. He has silenced all who questioned his authority. Gentiles from afar have begun to bow before his sovereignty. And now in what to human apprehension appears the coronal hour of his life, the voice from heaven is heard once more in answer to his prayer: "I have both glorified" my name "and will glorify it again."

The crowd is hushed in awe. Some whisper, "It thundered!" (little less than a miracle at that place and season). Others reply with bated breath, "An angel spake to him."

But Jesus answered and said, "This voice hath not come for my sake, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall

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the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth [that is, crucified], will draw all men unto myself.”¹

Then, aware that the malignant fury of the chief priests and rulers of the people would soon break forth in deeds that must destroy both their nation and themselves, filled with pity for them and for those they would lead to ruin, then, I believe, he arose and gazing upon the throng beneath and before him repeated in substance the lament which had been forced from him as he left the Royal Porch. With those words upon his lips he descended the marble steps into the Court of the Women, crossed it, and passing through the Gate Beautiful, left the temple, never to enter it again.

¹ John xii, 30-32.

CHAPTER VI

BIRTH PANGS

As they left the temple which the Master had just said he would not enter again, the disciples drew his attention to the strength of its structure. Their doing so seems to have been a half-hearted protest against the horrors foreshadowed in his lament over its impending destruction; a faint and diffident echo of Peter's "Far be it from thee!" Mark reports that *one* of the disciples saith, "Master, behold what manner of stones and what buildings!" The "one" may have been Peter himself, venturing again to "rebuke" his Lord. Probably all of them were semi-consciously seeking comfort from the superstitious belief that the temple at least should endure to the end of time, and therefore pointed to the visible signs of its indestructibility. For Christ replied, "Seest thou [art thou looking at] these great buildings?" that is, are you basing hopes upon their apparent durability? "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, which shall not be thrown down."¹ The words

¹ Mark xiii, 2, R.V.

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bewildered them. They may have thought he was speaking in a parable which they did not understand, and lingered to ponder his meaning. It is plain that they did not follow him immediately, for we are told that afterwards, as he sat on the Mount of Olives, they came unto him for more light, as they had been accustomed to do when they failed to comprehend his parables. Then and there they asked him three questions. The questions were requests for an explanation of what he had said about the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. The predictions reported in the 13th of Mark, the 21st of Luke, and the 24th of Matthew were the answers to these questions. The questions were:—

1. When shall these things be?
2. What shall be the signs of thy presence?
3. And of the end of the age?

Before reading Christ's replies we shall do well to fix in our minds three facts.

1. It has been generally assumed that some of the predictions reported in these chapters refer to the siege of Jerusalem, and others to a period indefinitely remote, but immediately preceding the destruction of our planet or at least the death of all its inhabitants. The latter half

of this assumption must be erroneous. Both Mark and Matthew affirm that Christ declared in words as plain as language can be made, and with a solemnity of emphasis that cannot be increased: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till *all* these things be accomplished. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."¹ That statement is so clear, so concise, so exhaustive, and so emphatically made, that there seems no possibility of its having been misunderstood and therefore misreported. We are obliged to conclude either that the Master was mistaken when he affirmed so impressively that he was not, or that his predictions contain no reference to what we mean by "the end of the world." Nothing can increase the strength of conviction with which I accept the latter alternative. But there may be some to whom the following consideration may make it appear more certain.

Our gospel of Matthew was written about 70 A. D.; probably a year or two after, perhaps a year or two before that date. A generation had therefore passed before it was given to the world. Is it credible that the author would have published as an utterance of Christ a statement

¹ Matt. xxiv, 34, 35, R. V.; Mark xiii, 30, 31.

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which time had already proved false? Yet if the writer did not, when he wrote, believe that all the predictions on Olivet had been fulfilled, that is exactly what he did.¹

2. Our authorized Bible says the disciples asked, "What shall be the sign of thy coming?"² The margin of the Revised Version reads more accurately and in better harmony with the context, "What shall be the sign of thy presence?" Even if at first it seems perplexing, we shall do well to use the right word.

¹The probability that Matthew's Gospel in its present form was composed after the destruction of Jerusalem is strong. Dr. Bernhard Weiss considers the parenthesis in Matt. xxiv, 15, "Let him that readeth understand," a comment interjected by the writer to make his readers recognize in something that was going on before their eyes the fulfillment of the prediction concerning the "abomination of desolation," so that they might take warning and fly from Jerusalem as Christ had told them to. The flight of Christians to Pella occurred three years before the siege. Dr. Weiss therefore dates the Gospel 67 A. D. It matters little, however, to the argument whether the Gospel was written three years before or any time after the destruction of Jerusalem. If it was after that time, the Evangelist must have thought all the predictions fulfilled. If it were three years before, no prophet's eye was needed to discern in the cloud over the doomed city the lightning that destroyed it.

² Matt. xxiv, 3.

3. The authorized version also reads: What shall be the sign of "the end of the world"? The marginal reading of the Revised is: "the consummation of the age." Here too the [right word is less likely to mislead.

These three facts kept constantly in mind will enable us to read the much-debated discourse in a way that throws light upon its most obtrusive perplexities. When the disciples came to him, our Lord was alone on the summit of Olivet. That hill was more than two hundred feet higher than any part of Jerusalem. Probably no combination of military strength, architectural splendor, and floral beauty so impressive as that which lay before him has been elsewhere seen. The west slope of the hill, covered with rich verdure, formed the east boundary of the narrow Kidron valley. That valley, irrigated by its crystal brook, art had made a blooming garden. The west boundary of the valley, terraced with successive banks of flowers to a height of more than three hundred feet, concealed the Gibraltar-like rock upon which the temple enclosure stood, and was crested by the noble line of white marble columns which, rimming the temple square on the east, formed the outer colonnade of Solomon's Porch. Beyond

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the temple hill, and separated from it by a deep valley spanned by a superb bridge of marble and filled with bazaars, appeared magnificent palaces, stupendous fortresses, and those massive walls surmounted at frequent intervals by towers which were believed, and by the siege of Titus were proved, to be impregnable to any assaulting engines of the ancient world. These structures, excepting the old wall, were of white marble. Beyond them, extending to a distant barrier of purple hills, were orchards, vineyards, and gardens in uninterrupted succession.

But the central object in view, the object which dominated all others by its strength and beauty, "as a sleeping lion amid a flock of sheep";¹ or rather by the interest and reverential awe it inspired, as a shepherd among his charge, was the temple itself, a square of a thousand feet inclosed on two sides by white marble colonnades of surpassing grandeur; paved with variegated marbles, swelling upward in slope or terrace toward a colossal brick of white marble fifteen feet high, some hundreds long, and of proportionate breadth, on which the sacred buildings stood.

It was late afternoon. The declining sun, by

¹ Josephus.

the black shadows of the golden spikes that rose like reeds from the temple roof, italicized the dazzling splendor in which it clothed the "dwelling place" and symbolized the glory of him whose face no man might see and live.

Consider what that temple meant to the Jew. It was to him the visible sign of Jehovah's presence. It was all and more than all that the tabernacle had been to his ancestors. He had been taught to regard it as the pledge of permanence to his people. Its destruction would signify to him the effacement of his nation. The statement that not one stone of it should be left upon another sounded to him as it would sound to us if we heard one say: "Your flag shall vanish from the seas. Your constitution shall perish. Your people shall be exterminated. The United States shall be blotted from the map of nations."

And the disciples had just heard the Master say: "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Of those words we may be sure they were thinking. What we mean by "the end of the world" had not entered their minds when they asked the three questions:—

1. When shall these things be?

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“These things” must signify the things of which they were thinking; the things of which Christ had been speaking; namely, the destruction of the temple and of Jerusalem. The awful prospect had appalled them. It was in some way connected with their Lord’s death. Yet he had told them he would be with them always.¹ But he had told them also that he was soon to die. They were sore perplexed. They did not yet understand what he had said about his death and resurrection. If he died out of their sight, how could they know he was with them? What evidence of his presence would he give them?

2. Therefore they ask: “What shall be the sign of thy presence?” It was the question so often asked by the breaking heart when the shadow of death falls upon the one it loves best.

3. And what shall be the sign of the “consummation of the age”? Of what age? Of course they mean the period preceding the advent of the kingdom the Master had come to establish; the kingdom in which they were to be ministers; the kingdom of the Messiah of whom Moses and all the prophets did speak; the kingdom which John the Baptist had declared to be at

¹ Matt. xviii, 20.

hand; the kingdom of which Christ himself continually spoke; the kingdom for the coming of which he taught them to pray; the kingdom of which, even after the resurrection, they asked, "Lord, dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"¹ This too must be in some way connected with their Lord's death and the horrors he predicted.

The questions revealed the perturbed, bewildered confusion of the disciples' minds. The Master's replies to them are reported briefly in Mark xiii, Luke xxi, and Matthew xxiv.

To the first question, "When shall these things be?" he refused a definite answer. He told them that the exact time — the day and hour — no man knew; but it should be within their generation.

To the second and third, what should be the signs of his presence and of the end of the age, — age of which the temple was the visible emblem, — he gave replies sufficiently definite to prepare them for the exhortation enforced by the parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Last Judgment.

I have said that the burden of the Saviour's instruction to the Twelve after leaving the fig

¹ Acts i, 6.

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tree was, "Let not your heart be troubled." The preface to this last discourse illustrates the truth of the statement.

Before describing the horrors that would in the near future confront them, the Saviour guarded them from despair by the assurance that, appalling as his predictions appeared and terrible as their fulfillment would be, the coming tribulations, the like of which had never been on earth and should never be again, — tribulations which unless they were shortened would destroy even the elect, — that those tribulations would be — as we see clearly they were — "birth pangs," the travail by which the new heavens and the new earth should be born.¹

All that the Lord foretold occurred as he said it would, within a generation. From the date of the crucifixion to the destruction of Jerusalem less than forty years later, a succession of false christs, claiming to bear divine commissions for the deliverance of their country from the Roman yoke, did "deceive many," and lead many to ruin. There were wars and rumors of wars. The history of Judæa during the period preceding the siege of Titus is a record of insurrection, war, pestilence, famine, and bloody massacres.

¹ Mark xiii, 8 ; Matt. xxiv, 8, R. V.

The abomination of desolation to which both Mark and Matthew call special attention was set up and stood "where it ought not," in abundant time to give the intended warning which sent believers flying to Pella. For in 67 A. D. the zealots gained possession of the temple, and made even the Holy of Holies a shambles. On one day of that year at sunrise eight thousand corpses strewed the temple floors; the inner sanctuary was slippery with human blood; the most holy place had been made their military citadel and arsenal by a band of assassins. If a single dead body defiled the whole temple, what must have been the horror of the Jew when he saw all its courts thronged with corpses?

From that hour the temple was held by one or another armed faction. Within it fighting was continuous. Still the people went there to worship. Many were killed by missiles while offering sacrifice. But so great was the superstitious confidence in the protective power of the "Holy House" that, at the last, six thousand wretches, — men, women, and children, — led by a "false christ," obstinately refusing to fly, remained there to be massacred.

"Then shall be great tribulation, such as hath not been from the beginning of the world until

now, no, nor ever shall be.”¹ Then followed the siege which remains to this day the unique horror of history. A description of it is needless. A few facts will suffice to show the truth of our Lord’s predictions.

More than a million victims perished before the Roman armies entered the city. Famine became so imperative that armed patrols traversed the streets daily, entering every house and inspecting its inmates. When they found a face that showed no sign of starvation they applied torture to compel the surrender of food assumed to be concealed. Mothers ate their children.

Months before the capture of the city every tree had disappeared from Kidron Valley, and in its place stood a cross upon which the body of some Jew writhed or rotted. On a single day three thousand were crucified, within sight of the temple wall.

When at last the city was taken, the conquerors razed the temple to the ground, and leveled every building in the city except three towers left for the protection of a garrison. From that hour the Jewish nation ceased to exist. Nearly a hundred thousand survivors were sent to toil in the mines of Egypt or perish in the gladiatorial shows

¹ Matt. xxiv, 21, R. V.

at Rome. But for the Jewish nation, the end of the age had come. It was no longer possible to obey their law, for the sacrifices it required must be offered and the festivals it enjoined must be celebrated at Jerusalem and in the temple, and both had ceased to be. The end of the age for Judæa had come, and it came before "that generation — passed."

What followed? Precisely what Christ predicted. "Immediately, after the tribulation of those days, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken : and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." ¹

For the interpretation read and ponder the words of the Hebrew prophets and of the Apocalypse, noting also carefully our Lord's method of metaphoric speech as reported by St. John.

¹ Matt. xxiv, 29-31, R. V.

That we are not to understand the words literally is certain.

1. Because when the time limit fixed by Christ for these events had passed, there is sufficient evidence that no visible angels blowing audible trumpets had appeared.

2. When the first of those changes foretold by Christ took place, Peter affirmed that the last days spoken of by Joel the prophet, when the sun should be darkened and the moon should cease to give her light, had come. Yet nothing had occurred to attract the attention of astronomers.

3. It was the frequent usage of the prophets to describe great social and political changes as disturbances in the celestial bodies.¹ There is a trace of the same metaphoric form of expression in our common phrases "the political sky," "the social horizon," "the financial atmosphere is *clouded* with gloom," "grief has swept all the stars from my sky," "the sun has risen upon my hopes," "his sun has set." No one dreams of taking such expressions literally.

4. From the time when Jerusalem ceased to exist, the expectation of a visible Christ began

¹ Joel ii, 28-32 ; Is. xiii, 10 ; Ez. xxxii, 7 ; Amos v, 20 ; Matt. xxvi, 64 ; Rev. vi, 12, et passim.

to vanish from the minds of his disciples, and the consciousness of his spiritual presence to take its place. In the clouds and darkness the sign of the Son of man appeared to his disciples and was recognized by them from east to west, from north to south. Christians no longer were tempted to listen when men cried "Lo here! Lo there!" as the Thessalonians had been. They began to discern everywhere the sign of the Son of man in the providences that begirt and the spirit which inspired them. They apprehended at last that they themselves were the angels sent forth to "gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven."¹ Thus from the travail of the great tribulation the new kingdom of God was born.

"Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away until all these things shall be fulfilled." Then followed the exhortation "Watch!" enforced by the three parables in the 25th of Matthew. "And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

"But," it may be asked, "if all the woes foretold by Christ have come to pass, do not these parables lose their power over us?"

¹ Mark xiii, 27, R. V.

Why should we watch for what has already occurred?"

I think it is because we fancy no tribulations at all like those Christ predicted will come until some future period indefinitely remote, that his exhortation presses with scarcely a feather's weight upon us. If we had been taught to look upon the siege of Jerusalem and all that came of rejecting Christ nineteen hundred years ago, and to understand that similar calamities always come upon those who reject him, I think we should "watch" more carefully than we do.

Had Frenchmen appreciated that if they scoffed at God and said "Ha! Ha!" to his commandments, the Reign of Terror would follow soon; had our fathers been taught to discern the sign of the Son of man in their sky, warning them that stealing black men from Africa would bear the bitter fruits it has produced, because the judgment of *this* (not that) world must come, and the prince of *this* world be cast out and the sign of the Son of man be *revealed*; had the fact that every word spoken by him on Olivet was fulfilled—as with solemn asseveration he declared it would be—upon the generation then on earth convinced

our fathers that Christ is Lord of this present world, and prevented us — their children — from fancying we should have to give no account until we reach another, perhaps both we and those who have preceded us might have listened with augmented interest to the exhortation: “*Watch and pray.*”

CHAPTER VII

JUDAS

“AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these words, he said unto his disciples, Ye know that after two days the passover cometh, and the Son of man is delivered up to be crucified.”¹

Ponder that statement. Jesus is still on the west brow of Olivet. Gazing upon their holy city and the temple which they have been taught to regard as the Gibraltar of their national existence, he has told his disciples that both city and temple shall soon be utterly destroyed; that immediately after their destruction he will be revealed as the lightning which flashes from the east even to the west; and that those who watch for his appearing shall be like the wise virgins who entered in to the marriage feast before the door “was shut,” and like the servants whose fidelity reaped rich rewards. He has declared himself to be the Sovereign Judge whose verdicts decide all human destinies. To

¹ Matt. 26, 1-2, R. V.

these predictions he added another. Reminding them that the passover would, as they knew, be celebrated in two days, he told them, what they did not know, namely, that *then* he should be delivered up and crucified.

Yet there are those who would have us believe that he was an enthusiast so elated by unexpected popularity that he could not see facts as they were. He was the only one who did see facts as they were. That he should be crucified so soon was a fact which even those who brought it about still deemed impossible. Either the next day, or more probably that same evening before our Lord left the Mount of Olives, representatives of two of the baffled factions held another meeting. Their attempt to discredit him had resulted in their own confusion. It had increased his popularity and gone far toward destroying their own. For three days Christ had walked the temple floors as its acknowledged Lord, and they dared not face him again or openly dispute his right to do so. But their discomfiture had not only intensified their hatred. It had made them wary. It forced them to devise a subtler scheme for his destruction. That the people had accepted him with an enthusiasm they dared not challenge was no

longer doubtful. But the keen-eyed conspirators saw clearly that the enthusiasm had been kindled by a complete misunderstanding of its object. They saw that the enthusiasts expected him to break the yoke of Rome. It was not possible to prove that he could not, it might be possible to show that he would not do so. The conspirators were satisfied that he would not make use of physical force. If they could exhibit him in fetters which they knew he would not and the people would think he could not break, there was good reason to believe that those who had received him as a Saviour would reject him as an impostor. Events proved that they were right. But how shall they get the fetters upon him? To arrest him publicly will be too dangerous. It must be done in secret. Therefore they will have to wait till after the feast. Thus it came to pass that while those who arrested him were resolving that they would not do it for eight days, he told his disciples that they would do it in two. Whence came his knowledge?

One can scarcely read the gospels so carelessly as not to notice the frequently recurring expressions to the effect, "Then his disciples knew" or "remembered" or "understood" something

that Jesus had previously said or done. Such statements show how he trained them. They saw, often with amazement, that in matters within their own experience things always came to pass as Jesus said they would. Finding his words true in the realm where it was possible to test them, they came gradually and unconsciously to trust what he told them of those larger issues in the unseen and eternal world into which as yet they could not peer.

“When Jesus had finished all these words” it is probable he led the disciples again to Bethany. The narrative implies that, though Mark mentions only Peter and James and John and Andrew, all of the Twelve were with him. If so, it also implies that before they reached Bethany one of their number stole away to go, no one but the Master knew or suspected whither.

Did Judas walk swiftly back to Jerusalem? When he reached the road over which he had followed the Lord and heard the hosannas three days before, was there no faltering? Did no thoughts arise to give him pause? Were there “no daggers of the mind” which needed all the ingenuity of a perverted will to bend into signals marshaling him the way that he was going?

How shall he explain his treachery? He has

cause enough for confidence that his errand will secure a welcome from the conspirators if he can convince them of his sincerity. But he does not know their plans, and until he does cannot appreciate how much they need the help it is in his power to give. He can make it safe to arrest Jesus before the feast, and by doing so avoid the delay which, though apparently imperative, is obviously a risk. But of this he is imperfectly informed.

Probably no man ever walked two miles, alone, in the night, on his way to commit a deed which he knew would render him to all his associates a loathsome creature, without fierce struggles to convince himself that black is white. Does not Judas strive to arm himself against self-contempt and the contempt his conduct will beget even in those who will profit by his treachery? Next to self-contempt for his crime the torture a criminal feels most keenly is the contempt of those who pay him for committing it. How did Judas approach those priests who were still writhing under the exposure of their hypocrisies? Does the traitor tell them that he has been fearfully deceived? That he believed Jesus a prophet of Jehovah? Never doubted it until he saw honorable merchants, whom the High Priest himself

had licensed to do business in the temple, ignominiously driven out of it and their property destroyed? "But this very morning, when I heard that deceiver denouncing everything that is sacred; railing even at your Holinesses; my eyes were fully opened. For we know that you are the teachers appointed by Jehovah to guide Israel in the way of life. Even he had to confess that you sit in Moses' Seat, and therefore we ought to observe and do all your commandments. He ought to be put out of the way before he deludes others as he has deluded me. I can deliver him into your hands. I am a peniless man because I gave up everything to follow that deceiver. I have nothing left but my integrity."

And they gave him thirty pieces of silver. It was probably only earnest money which encouraged him to hope for more when his crime was completed. The sum may have been fixed at the price of a common slave with grim irony of contempt for Judas, who was selling himself. The same contempt was afterwards expressed in the brutal response to the traitor's despairing attempt to undo his work. If, as is probable, the coins given him were shekels of the sanctuary, each piece may have fortified his baseness.

He eyes the superscription: "Jerusalem the Holy." "And has not he whom I am helping to disarm declared that our Holy City shall be destroyed? This blossoming branch gives the lie to that!" And as he turns the coin and views the obverse: "Here is the cup of blessing which promises the protection of Jehovah to his chosen people."

The silver appeals to the traitor's avarice; the superscription to that kind of patriotism which "is the last refuge of a scoundrel"; the branch and the cup to the superstition which invariably haunts the grave of religion.

How often does cupidity stand weighing its bribe until able to see in it the just reward of right endeavor!

"The devil can cite scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek,
A goodly apple rotten at the heart."

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE GUEST-CHAMBER

WHERE our Lord passed Wednesday we are not told. What we know of him makes it probable that he was in the closet with his Father. Jerusalem waited for him, but he did not appear. Wednesday night. Thursday morning. Still no word of him.

Thursday evening in the guest-chamber of a private house in the city he gave the disciples the visible pledge of his perpetual presence, and spoke those words reported by St. John which have been for nearly two milleniums the inspiration of his people in all their tribulations; their deliverance from the bondage of sin and death.

It has been generally assumed that the "Last Supper" was the passover meal. The question of the disciples, "Where wilt thou that we make ready for thee to eat the passover?" with the reply, "Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Teacher saith, My time is at hand; I keep the passover at thy house with my

disciples,"¹ has been supposed to make that certain. But the assumption creates difficulties serious enough to make its correctness doubtful.

That Christ was crucified on Friday and that the Last Supper occurred the preceding evening, as we reckon time, is unquestioned.² John indicates plainly that the lawful time for the paschal meal was Friday evening. A rapid reading of the other gospels has left upon many the impression either that Thursday evening was the lawful time or that our Lord celebrated the feast before the law allowed him to. Neither of these suppositions seems tenable.

1. If we assume that John was mistaken and that Thursday evening was the proper time for the feast, a multitude of difficulties arise. No one of them may be insuperable, but combined they are extremely formidable. Some of them — not all, I think — have been grouped by Professor Sanday as follows:—

“But in any case the synoptic version is too much burdened with contradictions to be taken as it stands. Many of these have been often

¹ Matt. xxvi, 17, 18, R. V.

² It must be kept in mind that by Jewish reckoning each day began on what we should call the evening of the day before.

pointed out. In Mark xiv, 2 (Matt. xxvi, 5) we are expressly told that the Sanhedrin determined to arrest Jesus, but not 'during the feast' lest there should be a tumult among the people. But, according to the synoptic account, it was on the most sacred day of the feast, and after the Pass-over had been eaten, that the arrest was carried out.¹ Further, we observe that although the Last Supper is described as a Passover,² there is no hint or allusion to its most characteristic feature, the paschal lamb. The events of the night would involve sacrilege for a devout Jew. On such a holy day it was not allowed to bear arms; and yet Peter is armed, and the servants of the High Priest, if not themselves armed, accompany an armed party.³ Then we have the hurried meeting of the Sanhedrin, who, according to the synoptist

¹ My understanding of Judas's treachery minimizes this difficulty, but magnifies the objection that on the sacred night the mock trials would not have been allowed.

² Where is it so described?

³ More significant still it seems to me that he who came to fulfill the law and the prophets; who declared that it became him to fulfill all righteousness (that is, as Coleridge has explained, all the outward forms of righteousness), and who bade his disciples observe and do all that those who sat in Moses' seat commanded, should not have corrected Peter for carrying a sword, if it was "such a holy day."

version, would have just risen from the paschal meal. Jesus is taken to the *prætorium* of the Roman governor, to enter which would cause defilement, and that on the most sacred day of the feast. Simon of Cyrene is represented as coming in from the country, which though perhaps not necessarily implying a working day, looks more like it than a day treated as a Sabbath. The haste with which the bodies were taken down from the cross is accounted for by the sanctity of a day that is about to begin, not of one that is just ending (Matt. xv, 42). If it had been the latter, Joseph of Arimathea could not have 'bought' the linen cloth in which the body was laid. . . .

"In all the accounts it is noticeable that *one* cup only is mentioned, which was partaken of by *all*; whereas at the Passover a special point is made of each man's bringing his own cup to drink from.

"It seems on the whole to be safe to say that if the two accounts are to be harmonized, it is not St. John who will need to be corrected from the Synoptists, but the Synoptists who will have to be corrected by St. John."¹

St. John states explicitly² that the Last Sup-

¹ Sanday, "*Criticism of the Fourth Gospel*, p. 153.

² John xiii, 1 and 29.

per took place before the feast of the passover. With that statement every occurrence he relates is consistent. But if the Synoptists place the passover on Thursday, they are grossly inconsistent with themselves. I think, however, Professor Godet has shown that though they may appear at first sight to contradict the fourth gospel, a careful scrutiny of what they say reveals certain undesigned confirmations of its statement.

Luke, whose account is fuller here than that of either Mark or Matthew, mentions two facts which indorse the chronology of John. The first Godet states thus : —

“ On the evening of the 13th, before the stars appeared in the heavens, every father, according to Jewish custom, had to repair to the fountain to draw pure water with which to knead the unleavened bread.” It is natural to infer that “ the man with a pitcher ” whom Peter and John were told to follow was on this errand.

If it were so, the day must have been, as St. John says it was, that preceding the paschal meal. But there is another statement of Luke which seems to me decisive.¹

Before instituting the Eucharist our Lord

¹ Luke xxii, 15, 16.

told the disciples that he had earnestly desired¹ to eat "this passover" with them before he suffered, but could not because he should die before the time.

"This passover" would of course be understood as designating the passover at hand, as we say a day or two before the 25th of December, "this Christmas."

2. To escape the apparent contradictions between St. John and the other Evangelists, the theory has been advanced that our Lord anticipated the feast by twenty-four hours. To that hypothesis the fact that the 14th of the month was fixed for it by law seems destructive. It is not credible that he who came "not to destroy but to fulfill" the law and the prophets would place the supreme memorial of himself upon a pedestal of anarchy or even of a single broken commandment.

Rejecting as untenable both suppositions, — that which makes Thursday the 14th of the month and therefore the lawful time for the paschal meal, and that which assumes a lawless

¹ It is an interesting coincidence, if nothing more, that in each of the other five instances in which this word is used to express a desire of Christ, it refers to a desire that was disappointed.

anticipation of the day, — how are we to interpret the statement that the disciples “prepared the passover” in the guest-chamber, and that they did so because the Master told them to?

I understand that they did make such partial preparation as was possible on the 13th, expecting to complete other needful arrangements the next day.¹ This is confirmed by the fact that when Judas left the table some of the disciples supposed he went to procure things needful “for the feast.” But when Christ had brought the Twelve to the guest-chamber he told them that much as he desired to fulfill their expectations by eating this passover with them, his death would make it impossible.

Then he shared with them either the preparatory semi-sacred meal which was often held before the great festival, or, what seems to me more probable, the ordinary evening supper.

There is nothing recorded of it that suggests

¹ It is fair to assume that the crowded condition of Jerusalem made it necessary to engage a room at least as early as the day before it was to be used, and it seems in the highest degree improbable that obtaining the lamb and such other things as were needed for the feast was postponed until a few hours before they were required. It is plain from John xii, 29 that at the time of the Last Supper the preparations for the paschal meal were incomplete.

anything more. No allusion is made to a lamb, and a lamb was the nucleus of the paschal feast. Around the lamb all its distinguishing observances clustered. Without the lamb it would have been an Easter without the resurrection. The energetic efforts made to trace in the Last Supper a carrying out of the paschal ceremonies are futile. Most of them are on a par with that which sees in the washing of the disciples' feet a carrying out of the asserted paschal custom of washing the hands, which was not a paschal, but the usual custom. When instituting the Eucharist our Lord made no allusion to the flesh and blood of a lamb. He pointed to the bread—the ordinary daily food—saying, "This is my body broken for you" (notice, it was imperative that not a bone of the paschal lamb should be broken), and to wine, the common drink, saying, "This is my blood shed for many."

Remember that he is giving them a memorial of himself and a pledge of his perpetual presence. Therefore he neither said nor did what might imply "as often as the passover occurs do this in remembrance of me," which would have meant, "Think of me once a year"; but "*this* do in remembrance of me," which means, "as often as you eat bread and drink wine," that

is, every day, usually three times every day, they were to see in the food they ate and the wine they drank a reminder of him; a pledge and witness of his presence.

The record in Acts which tells us that the disciples broke bread daily from house to house shows that the Apostles understood the Lord's command as referring to their common meals. Whenever they ate and drank they were to do it in remembrance of him. His eating before them after the Resurrection; his asking them if they had "any meat" (that is, food) confirms this view, and the revealing of himself to the disciples at Emmaus in the *breaking of bread* is still another lexicon by which to interpret his design.

To me it is an abiding inspiration to know that when I invoke the blessing of God with my family upon our daily food, we are obeying the Lord's command more accurately than when at stated and long-separated intervals I minister in the church building at what is called "the Lord's table." The thought helps me to "say grace" with sincerity, and "whether I eat or drink" to "do all to the glory of God." Nothing seems to me more remote from our Lord's intent and from the example of the Apostles

than observing the Lord's Supper as if it were something too sacred for daily use. There was no place too humble for him to enter; no banquet too secular for him to share. His enemies called him "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber" for just that reason. But the sun is not defiled when it penetrates the sewer, or by its touch turns sewage into lilies. It has seemed to me that the man who counts his family board "the Lord's table," and every meal a communion with Christ, has discovered the strongest protection against the sins of Dionysus or the temptations of Dives, and will be more likely to act in both his business and his recreations in a way which will show not only that he has been, but that he is, with Jesus.


And now let us enter the guest-chamber. Before crossing its threshold a word of preparation is needed.

The reader who keeps in mind only the narrative of any one of the Evangelists will be sure that in the remainder of this chapter the sequence of incidents is wrongly given. The gospels differ widely from one another in both the facts which they report and the order in which the facts they all report are related. What they treat as important is the facts themselves,

not their chronology. The harmonist therefore must handle the facts as one handles the blocks in Ullman's Society Picture Puzzle. The only proof that they are arranged correctly is that they fit into each other so as to make a picture. I think my arrangement will stand that test, for—at least so it seems to me—each incident is naturally brought about and explained by the occurrence which immediately preceded it.

Furthermore, though it is not said, it is implied that John in some way signaled to Peter what Christ told him of Judas and the sop.

Peter and John, sent to follow "the man bearing a pitcher," have made ready the pass-over. That is, as I have endeavored to show, they have secured the guest-chamber and made such other preparations as were possible, on the thirteenth day of the month. They also have made ready for the usual evening meal.

The table is six or eight inches high. It forms a rectangle like this , the fourth side open for the convenience of attendants in replenishing the viands. The guests are ranged along the outer and inner sides of the rectangle. They recline on mats, leaning upon their left elbows. The place of honor is the central mat facing the opening. Their bodies lie at a con-

siderable angle from the board, and their right arms are free. Thus the head of each is near the breast of the person on his left. John was next on the right of Jesus. Therefore when that disciple bent slightly backward and the Master slightly forward, the lips of Jesus were close to the ear of John. This is the picture which gives its tender significance to the expression : " The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father " ;¹ as if, at the Communion table of heaven, the Father whispered into the ear of the Son, as Jesus whispered into the ear of that disciple whom he loved, the secret which he sent the Son to reveal on earth. It was John who reported the words, " As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you."

Upon the table are large dishes filled with thick soup. One of them is before the Master; beside each of these is a pyramid resembling a heap of large round crackers or English hard biscuits. Along the edge of the table are cups of wine and full pitchers to replenish them. There are no plates, no knives, no forks, no spoons. All feed themselves by breaking off fragments of the crackers and using them for spoons.

¹ John i, 18.

Before the disciples were placed "there arose also a contention among them, which of them was accounted to be greatest,"¹ that is, which should sit next the Master. It was probably a show of feeling too slight for the notice of a careless eye, since under the spell of the Master's presence the disciples would hardly have been conspicuously rude. A pushing forward, a frown, a flushed cheek; probably nothing more, for they took their places promptly. Jesus made no comment until all had done that. Then, while the Twelve waited for the expected blessing, the Master, clasping them all together with his eye, said:—

"The kings of the Gentiles have lordship over them; and they that have authority over them are called Benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is the greater among you, let him become as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve."²

Then he arose. Just inside the door stood a copper ewer and basin, with a linen towel thrown over them. These were for the servant who usually waited to cleanse the feet of guests, as in American hotels it was the universal custom forty years ago for an attendant with a whisk broom to stand in the *entresol*, waiting to

¹ Luke xxii, 24, R. V. ² Luke xxii, 25, 26, R. V.

brush the dust of travel from those who came from the trains. But there were no menials in the Upper Chamber. Only the Lord of all the earth, and those he was training to sit on thrones, were there. When he had thus spoken he arose, laid aside his outer garments, leaving his arms free as a slave's would be; twisted the long towel around his waist so that its ends hung down before him; poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet. I think Judas may have started when he saw that, and remembered that the amount of the earnest money he had received for selling his Master was the usual price of a slave.

"Thou shalt never wash my feet!" protested Peter.

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

"Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

"He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."¹

What can the Lord mean?

Judas alone knows. The others feel what they cannot define. Something is wrong. But what?

¹ John xiii, 8ff.

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.”¹

The eleven are humble now. “It is not I, is it? Nor I, nor I.” Eleven have spoken. One is still silent. At Peter’s suggestion John, leaning back on the breast of Jesus, saith unto him: “Lord, who is it?”

“He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him.”² And he gave it to Judas.

At last the traitor is forced to speak.

“Rabbi! It is not I, is it?”

“It is,” was the whispered reply.

When Judas perceived, what he had begun to suspect, that his secret was not his secret, the Lord said unto him, “What thou doest, do quickly.”³ Instantly he went out, and “it was night.” All but the Master, John, and Peter supposed, because he had the purse, that he had been sent to buy what was needed for the feast or to give something to the poor.

Of the eleven there was no other whose temperament would make him feel so fierce a rage at the guilt of Judas as Peter. For Peter was the man of impulse. At times raised above the rest by magnificent enthusiasm, at times swept

¹ John xiii, 21.

² John xiii, 26, R. V.

³ John xiii, 27, R. V.

beneath them by a wave of refluent feeling, he was rarely master of his emotions. Before his choking fury found vent, Christ prevented the outbreak. Calling him twice by name, as when one shouts to arrest another on the brink of a precipice that other does not see, he exclaimed:

“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan obtained you [all] by asking, that he might sift you as wheat: but I made supplication for thee, that thy faith fail not: and do thou, when once thou hast turned again, stablish thy brethren.”¹

Thus the Lord changed Peter's wrath at Judas into anxiety for himself; warned him that not Judas only, but all of them, were in Satan's sieve, and that he, Peter, was the special object of prayer because, Peter may well have thought, he was in special danger.

The terrible suggestion instantly fixed Peter's thoughts upon his own danger. It was as when the sons of Zebedee wished in sudden anger to

¹ Luke xxii, 31, 32, R. V. margin. This exclamation as Luke reports it was a quick, sharp utterance. For example: “Obtained you by asking” is the translation of a single word, and the Greek has no need of an explanatory parenthesis to show that the “you” is plural. But the Authorized Version gives a wrong meaning; in fact implies the reverse of the true sense. And slow and cumbersome as the Revised Version is, it would be presumption for me to change it.

call down fire from heaven upon the Samaritans, and were told they knew not what spirit they were of.

Nothing, it seems to me, is more wonderful in the conduct of the Eleven; nothing shows more clearly how completely the spirit of the Master at last gained possession of their souls, than their mental attitude toward Judas. They seem to have veiled the memory of his crime in silence so far as it was possible to do so. Even when forced to speak of it they spoke in sorrow, not in anger. We hear from them no denunciations of his guilt, no trace of vindictive passion. Even Peter, for whom it must have been hardest to judge not that he might not be judged, when he had to mention the traitor spoke with tears in his voice, as we speak of a loved one gone astray: "For he was numbered among us, and received his portion in this ministry."¹

It was not, I conceive, until Christ had told them that whither he went they could not come, that Peter, probably mindful of the warning he had received, exclaimed, "Why cannot I follow thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee."

"Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Verily,

¹ Acts i, 17, R. V.

verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice." ¹

Afterward, when Peter remembered how Jesus had checked his wrath at Judas and warned him that he would act from cowardice as Judas had acted from avarice; when he recalled the bitterness of the tears he shed for having done so, we need not marvel that he threw no stone at the lost one whose remorse was measured, not by tears, but by suicide.

It seems to me also that the impression made upon the Eleven by those words of infinite tenderness in which Jesus called them "My little children," and bade them love one another as he loved them, must have deepened when they learned of Judas's crime and remembered how the Lord had borne with him, tried to save him, and, when that proved impossible, had spoken of him in a way which showed that no spark of anger at his crime could live in the flood of his compassion for its penalty. ²

Judas had gone when our Lord took bread and brake it and gave it unto his disciples.

Peter is silent now. John is crushed by the knowledge of the traitor's guilt. All have been told what cowards they shall prove this night.

¹ John xiii, 37, 38, R. V.

² Mark xiv, 21.

The morrow will leave them little heart to rail at Judas. All are immeasurably distressed by the announcement of the death which on that morrow shall take the Saviour from them. Peter has been told that it is not he who shall die for his Lord, but his Lord who shall die for them all. It was then, I think, when their sorrow was heaviest and their bewilderment greatest, that the eyes of Christ brightened ; the shadow cast by Judas passed from his face as he said, " Let not your heart be troubled " ; told them he would not leave them orphans ; that he would dwell with them more intimately than he had ever yet done. Then, I believe, he took the bread and the wine (not, be it remembered, the flesh of a lamb, which could be eaten only once a year, but the viands of their daily meals), and told them to find therein, whenever and wherever they ate and drank, the witness of the New Covenant sealed with his blood ; the pledge and witness of perpetual communion with himself.

" This do in remembrance of me."

I repeat what I have already said because it seems to me of dominant importance. All that bears upon the question indicates that we obey that blessed command more accurately when we give thanks at our meals, if the grace is sincerely

spoken, than when at appointed intervals we celebrate what we call "the communion," in a way that tends far more to make us feel that Christ is *not*, than that he is, always with us.

When we celebrate our birthdays we do not think first of what our mothers suffered, but rather of their joy that a child "was born into the world." So Paul thought of the cross. So Christ thought of it. For did he not say, in view of it, "I lay down my life for my sheep. No man taketh it from me"? "Therefore doth my father love me." So he meant us to think of his death as on birthdays we think of our mothers. Did he not say, "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy"?

If we had been so taught that every time we break our fast we should do it in remembrance of him, if we saw in the viands of each meal a pledge of his promise to be with us always and a witness of its fulfillment, life would be for his people gladder, more glorious, and infinitely safer than most of us find it now.

CHAPTER IX

GETHSEMANE

To many of us the fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth chapters of John are the most precious in the Bible. They were meant to be, and they were meant for disciples only. That is plainly shown by the last words of the fourteenth compared with the first of the eighteenth chapter.

“I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of the world cometh: and he hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.”¹

What that means it is hard to discover. I think it makes no sense at all. But a slight and perfectly allowable change in punctuation gives the meaning plainly.

“I will no more speak much with you, for the prince of this world cometh: and he hath nothing in me; but that the world may know that I love

¹ John xiv, 30, 31, R. V.

the Father (and as the Father gave me commandment so I do), arise, let us go hence."

The meaning of that is clear. It is this: What the Master intended for his disciples alone he had almost finished saying. They must now arise and go from the guest-chamber to those experiences which would convince the world of what they believed already.

Time has explained what was thus foreshadowed. The words spoken in the Upper Chamber are still the supreme message of Christ to the heart of his disciples. But what occurred after he arose and left it has been his supreme message to the world. Without the cross and the resurrection Christianity would have perished with the death of its Founder.

Before leaving the chamber our Lord spoke of the swords. Apparently he took no notice of the fact that Peter (and perhaps another of the Eleven) was armed, until he said:—

"When I sent you forth without purse, and wallet, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. And he said unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet: and he that hath none, let him sell his cloke, and buy a sword."¹

¹ Luke xxii, 35, 36, R. V.

The disciples misinterpreted his meaning until the events of that night explained it to them, — as they ought to make it clear to us. They did not understand that he was urging them at any cost to make sure of the spiritual weapons they had already tested and found sufficient. They thought he meant a literal sword, just as when he warned them against the leaven of the Pharisees they thought he meant literal yeast.¹ But something will soon occur to teach them he meant exactly the reverse. He reminds them that when he sent them forth unarmed and without even the things deemed needful for a journey, they lacked nothing. But the swords prove that they have forgotten that lesson. It must be repeated more impressively. He will have them take the swords and so discover, in a way they can never forget, the impotence of arms in his service. He does not tell them that. By a gesture he waves the subject aside. "It is enough." That is, enough has been said for the present. They will soon be forced to understand. When the right moment comes he will speak plainly.

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out unto the Mount of Olives. At its base was

¹ Mark viii, 15.

“a garden into which he entered, himself and his disciples.”

I shrink in awe from Gethsemane. I would leave the narrative without a word of comment, were it not that interpretations have been put upon our Saviour's agony which seem to me appalling calumnies. Many have said and more have feared that the Master's conduct in the Garden disclosed in him a weakness. They have seen in it a sign of flinching from the work given him to do; an evidence that he did not speak perfect truth when he said it was his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and declared himself the Good Shepherd who of his own free choice gave his life for the sheep. Thus it has been insinuated and sometimes asserted that the only perfect hero the world has known needed to pause and brace himself against his fears.

I believe that Gethsemane witnessed only a new revelation of the glory of Christ and the perfection of his manhood. When, therefore, I hear the agony he there endured portrayed as if he had been for an hour mastered by those apprehensions to which the Polycarps, the Blandinas, the Brébeufs, and thousands of others inspired by his spirit have shown themselves su-

perior, it seems to me not only that he has been vilely slandered, but that the blossom of perfection has been mistaken for its blight.

“And he saith unto his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John,”¹ ‘ the three who had seen him lift the little dead girl back to life; the three who had heard Moses and Elias talk with him concerning his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem; Peter who had said of the cross, “Far be it from thee,” and been called Satan for saying it; James and John the throne-seekers; James who will be the first to die for his Master; John whose eyes must be taught to see, through the dust of the falling walls of the old Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. “He taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly amazed, and sore troubled. And he saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: abide ye here, and watch. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him. And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto

¹ Mark xiv, 32f, R. V.

thee ; remove this cup from me : howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou ? Couldst thou not watch one hour ? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation : the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. And again he went away, and prayed, saying the same words.”¹ “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly : and his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground.”² “And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest : it is enough ; the hour is come : behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”³

While we gaze with eyes not blinded by compassion, but purged by awe, upon our Lord in his anguish, four facts should guard us from misconceiving too grossly the source of his agony.

I. He could not have been thinking of the cross, and praying to be spared the suffering it would bring ; for, first, as the author of the epistle to the Hebrews tells us, his petition was granted.⁴ The cup did pass from him. Second,

¹ Mark xiv, 33-39, R. V.

² Luke xxii, 44, R. V.

³ Mark xiv, 41, R. V.

⁴ Heb. v, 7.

it would be a bold man who should say that Jesus Christ required his disciples to do more than he did himself. But he certainly told them to take no anxious thought for the future, and the mockings, the scourging, and the cross were yet to come.

II. He had repeatedly affirmed, by implication and in both literal and figurative speech, that it was his joy to give his life for his own.¹

III. The agony was such as would be possible only to perfect purity, perfect love, and perfect manhood.

IV. In exact proportion as men and women become like him they must endure the same kind of suffering while they live in a world like this. "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of," was said to James and John.²

"Gethsemane" is called a mystery. I think it is mysterious only because we are so selfish, so callous, and so cowardly that we cannot understand perfect love. The mystery of the world's redemption is reflected dimly in every loving soul, and the agony of our Lord will, I

¹ John x, 11 and xv, 13.

² Matt. v, 10-12; Luke vi, 22; Matt. xx, 28; Mark x, 39.

believe, be better understood when women take the place of men as its interpreters.

A woman pure as snow and sensitive as a windflower, loving God and God's ways with the whole strength of her being, has loved and married a man who proves coarse, brutal, debauched, a moral leper. Having loved him she loves him to the end, and gives herself utterly to redeem the creature whom no one else will touch. I know not how they can, but women do such things. It is the mystery of Gethsemane. At last the man drags her into some den of nethermost infamy, some loathsome Satyrs' dance, and holds her fast amid its reeking orgies. Every fibre of her being quivers in an agony of repulsion from the sickening surroundings. The doors are locked. She cannot escape. She would not if she could, for that would kill the hope that has kept her alive so long. She has borne a thousand insults, faced a thousand horrors, hoping always by the sacrifice of herself to save the brute she loves. Every pain loyally endured for his sake has increased the love she bears him. It always does. And now to die for his salvation would fill her with joy. No thought of her own physical sufferings, present or to come, taints her agony. That is solely the automatic shrink-

ing of purity from filth; of perfect righteousness from smothering sin.

If you say this picture of woman's love is overdrawn, I answer: It is underdrawn. I have seen it. I have seen it more than once, and it has taught me to interpret the heart of Christ by the ways of those women who are least unworthy to be called his daughters.

Christ had given himself to save the world. He had endured such contradiction of sinners as we cannot conceive, and shall come nearest to conceiving if we imagine the Madonna a slave in the palace of Cleopatra. He had thrown out his heart for men to trample upon. It is his joy to die for them because by his death he will save them. But now they have begun to perpetrate the nethermost crime of our race, a crime beside which all other crimes seem virtues.

We have no means of measuring the agony of pure repulsion which contact with such iniquity would inflict upon a spirit perfectly pure, even though we have seen in Gethsemane its outward manifestation. We can come nearest to imagining it by the help of a physical illustration.

Think how you would feel if a leper twined his rotting arms around you, hugged you to his

foul breast, breathed his fetid breath into your nostrils, and kissed you.

But leprosy was only the *emblem* of sin. Compared with the pressure of sin itself upon our Saviour's soul the embrace of the leper upon your body would be as the touch of a finger to the thrust of a sword. Therefore — it was not apprehension of the future, since, when he entered Gethsemane, a consciousness of the iniquity, already begun, was pressing him — being in an agony¹ he prayed: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Not tomorrow's cup, with its Caiaphas and Herod and scourging and crucifixion. That cup he has chosen to drink. He will drink it without shrinking; aye, with joy. But "this cup"! the cup then at his lips. And it did pass. Peter and James and John saw an angel strengthening him. Perhaps it was one of the radiant two they had seen upon the shining Mount. Perhaps the

¹ High authority — the highest, I think — says that the more emphatically placed of the two words used by both Matthew and Mark to describe our Saviour's agony, means etymologically "to be away from home," to feel the homesickness of a stranger in a strange land. This derivation is disputed, but I believe has not been disproved. If it is correct, I do not know to what extent the original meaning clung to the words in the time of the Evangelists. But it seems to me significant.

angel spoke again of the decease by accomplishing which at Jerusalem he will redeem the world from the sin that causes his agony. We know not. But we know that the cup passed from him.

All illustrations are pitifully inadequate for a theme so far transcending all other human experience. But if we saw Florence Nightingale turn pale, quiver, and cry, "God save me from this," when she first heard the groans of wounded men — then enter the hospital where a hundred gashed and gory soldiers were writhing, cursing, dying, and with the composure of a surgeon hardened against such sights begin to bind up the wounds, while her smiles and cheering words gave hope and courage to all, the agony of the woman would increase our admiration of the heroine. Had she not felt so keenly, she could not have fought so devotedly.

When the cup passed, he returned to the sleepers, full of the peace that passeth understanding, tender as a mother rocking the cradle of her babe. A little space of silence. Then: "The Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners." For the tramp of approaching feet is audible now to the disciples also. The ministers of darkness neared the garden gate. There were servants of the High Priest. There were temple

guards with bludgeons. There were Roman veterans with swords and helmets: a vicious mob with a nucleus of orderly soldiers. They carry torches to search the garden. For they imagine that Christ, who has conquered their masters, will hide from *them*.

The Lord advanced to meet them.

"Whom seek ye?"

One or more of the fierce crew falters: "Jesus of Nazareth."

"I am he."

At that the lions became hares. They staggered back, every man of them; Roman veterans and fiery Jews fell prostrate before him. The Master stood alone in the moonlight, his friends behind him, his foes adoring at his feet. The Eleven came forward. The time to use the swords has arrived. Doubtless the disciples expect an easy and triumphant victory. Doubtless Peter's hand is on the hilt. The soldiers, their panic checked by the appearance of mortals like themselves and of weapons they understand, arise, and are asked again: "Whom seek ye?"

Again they answer: "Jesus of Nazareth."

"I told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way."¹

¹ John xviii, 8, R. V.

Judas was the first to rally. He cried, "Hail, Master," and kissed him.

"Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"

Then they bound him. They passed leather thongs around his wrists. They twisted a leather cord around his waist. They tied his arms to the arms of two soldiers on his right hand and on his left. A soldier led him by the cord that girded his waist.

Apparently some insult perpetrated by Malchus goaded Peter to frenzy, or perhaps he thought that now the time had arrived when the Lord meant him to strike. He drew his sword, and a part of the High Priest's servant's ear was shorn by one of the "two swords." Mark the contrast between moral power and Peter's futile weapon. You would expect the guards to rush upon Peter and cut him to earth. Doubtless they would have done so, had not Jesus spoken. Addressing the soldiers — bound and fettered as he was — he said: "Suffer ye thus far." That is, release my hand; permit me to do this.

Instantly, as if they had forgotten Peter's existence, though he stood before them sword in hand, they obeyed the Master. They freed

his hand. A touch, and the wound was healed. Then turning to Peter:—

“Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”¹

Peter had learned his lesson now. So had all the Eleven. None of them ever drew sword again. But the lesson was not quite completed till they discovered that for those who in the name of Jesus of Nazareth could make the lame walk, there was no need of adding sword or wallet to “such as” they had.²

When the Lord had condemned the sword and undone its work, knowing that his Father had given all things into his hands and that the air was thronged with invisible Powers singing with voices inaudible to mortal ears, “Glory to God in the Highest,” he moved in the majesty of conscious omnipotence forward to the crown of thorns and the cross of Calvary, while the disciples fled, because their half-opened eyes saw in him to whom all power in heaven and earth was given only a helpless though blameless prisoner.

¹ Matt. xxvi, 52.

² Acts iii, 6.

CHAPTER X

CAIAPHAS BEFORE CHRIST

JESUS CHRIST was never legally convicted. He was lynched. Arrested by order of a self-appointed vigilance committee, he was hurried before a mob of ecclesiastics collected in reckless defiance of the laws under which they assumed to act. They attempted to conduct the trial of their prisoner in a manner so grossly and conspicuously illegal that they dared not carry it through. The second tribunal which undertook to try him, less lawless in its method of convening, was more so than the first in its procedure. Before a verdict could be reached it was broken up by the clamor of the presiding judge and his partisans, shouting, "He is worthy of death."

Then the prisoner was taken by force to a Roman governor, and there accused of a crime to which no allusion had been made in either of the preceding mock trials. That governor, after three times pronouncing his perfect innocence, "delivered him to be crucified."

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A glance at the prominent actors in this tragedy will help us to understand the assassination and the events which led down to it.

There were four men in Jerusalem, each of whom had it in his power to prevent the murder. They were Annas, Caiaphas, Herod Antipas, and Pontius Pilate.

Annas was a born conspirator. Cool, calculating, remorseless, and, as I have already said, insatiably avaricious; with little conscience and less heart, he had the will of Jezebel and the intellectual suppleness of Machiavelli. He was a Sadducee and therefore under no restraint from fears or hopes of the hereafter. That his influence is seen everywhere and his hand nowhere during Holy Week, is explained by the fact that he had been deposed by the Romans from the office of high priest.

Joseph Caiaphas, his son-in-law, the nominal high priest, was a weaker man, scarcely more than a puppet moved by his wily father-in-law. He also was a Sadducee. His was a type of wickedness not inconsistent with ungovernable temper. Annas was the kind of criminal moulded by a powerful and malignant will. Caiaphas might have been Macbeth; Annas, Iago. Both were fearless.

Herod Antipas was the most despicable creature mentioned in the Gospels. The worst vices of other miscreants were his nearest approaches to virtue. In him drunkenness, murder, and adultery looked almost white. A parricide and a fratricide in purpose, though cowardice prevented him from becoming either in deed; living in incest; a traitor to all who trusted him; an arrant coward; a Sadducee who believed in neither angel nor spirit, but trembled for fear of ghosts, his character is adequately indicated by saying that he was the only human being of whom Christ ever spoke a word that has been construed as an epithet of contempt.¹

Of the four magnates in Jerusalem Pontius Pilate most resembles the usual wrong-doer. He was not inherently wicked. He was quick to appreciate the character of Christ, and showed a spiritual insight keener than any of the Twelve exhibited before the crucifixion. Yet of all the men named in the New Testament, there is none excepting Judas Iscariot whom the Christian imagination has painted in darker colors. Of his career we know little. We can scarcely tell whence he came or whither he went. We do not know whether his name signifies "spears-

¹ Luke xiii, 32.

man" or "freedman," "chevalier" or "slave." But the Gospels make three facts plain.

I. He was quick, as I have said, to discern the innocence and appreciate the royalty of Christ. Only Mary of Bethany surpassed him in this respect.

II. He tried with all the energy of a will not exceptionally weak to prevent the assassination which his fears compelled him to permit.

III. He was the only one of the four responsible for the crucifixion, of whose conduct Jesus spoke in palliation. "Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath greater sin" ¹ (is guiltier than thou).

Those words I take to be the key to a right interpretation of Pilate's character and conduct. It is important to understand them.

Of course they cannot mean "Thou wouldest have no power against me except it were given thee" from heaven, that is, by God. That was equally true of him who had greater sin. The words must therefore refer to the Emperor Tiberius, the only other source of Pilate's authority.

Pilate had cause enough for that fear of Ti-

¹ John xix, 11, R. V.

berius which, as the narrative shows, completely mastered him at last. Mr. Prichard¹ says that Pilate had been the "nominee of Sejanus," the fallen favorite of Tiberius. The authority for the statement I do not know, but it is so extremely probable and fits so accurately into the matrix formed by other and well-known facts as almost to authenticate itself. If true it is immensely significant. The appointment was made when Sejanus was the trusted and supreme favorite of the emperor. It is known that Sejanus cherished an implacable hatred of the Jews. In that respect Pilate, as is plain from both the Gospels and Josephus, was not far behind him. It was the policy of Tiberius to govern the provinces with great mildness, interfering as little as possible with their customs and prejudices. Pilate had begun his administration by inverting that policy. Twice and probably three times he trampled ruthlessly upon the dearest and most sacred sentiments of Jerusalem. For doing so he had been rebuked by Tiberius, but not removed. A power behind the throne seems to have kept him in his place.

But Sejanus had fallen from royal favor. In A. D. 31 he was put to death by imperial order.

¹ Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, art. "Tiberius."

Not only that, but his relatives and those who had been associated with him shared his fate. Tiberius was almost a monomaniac of suspiciousness. Probably there has never been anywhere a more searching system of espionage than that which he maintained at Rome during the latter years of his reign. It was exerted to the utmost for the destruction of all whom he suspected of complicity with the plots of his former favorite. It appears little less than a miracle that Pilate escaped. For he had thwarted and been rebuked for thwarting the imperial policy, and he was a living representative of the man whom the emperor had put to death for conspiring against him ; the man whose partisans were the special objects of that remorseless emperor's suspicion and consequent animosity. Furthermore, immediately after the execution of Sejanus, Tiberius began to treat the Jews with distinguished favor.

These facts abundantly explain why Pilate was so greatly terrified by the cry : "Thou art no friend of Cæsar." If he thwarted the popular will at Jerusalem, it would be easy to make it appear to the suspicious autocrat at Capri that he had outraged the people for whom that autocrat had recently shown especial consideration ;

that he had repeated the offense for which that autocrat had once rebuked him, and that such conduct branded him one of those for whom death would be too light a punishment.¹ Nothing else had he so much reason to dread as that the emperor might suspect his loyalty. These facts Annas evidently knew, for his plans were based upon them. So long as the conspirators accused Jesus vaguely or on religious grounds, Pilate heard their vociferations with unconcealed contempt, undisturbed as a lion by the nibbling of rats. The instant it was whispered, "This man setteth himself up against Cæsar," Pilate began to tremble, though he was perfectly aware that the charge was false. But when the cry arose, "If thou let this man go, thou art no friend of Cæsar!" terror mastered him, for it coupled him with the memory of Sejanus. If it were reported at Capri that he had again acted as Sejanus would have had him act; that he had

¹ The trend of present scholarship is to date the crucifixion in the year 29 A. D. But the arguments advanced to establish that date seem to me cobwebs before a broom, in view of the reasons given by Prof. Ewald for A. D. 33. "The cheap erudition of learned names" could give, I think, a list for the latter date that for numbers and weight of authority cannot be equaled by the other side.

done so in defiance of the emperor's well-known policy, and after having once been rebuked by the emperor for the same offense, he would be lost. For it was well known that the habit of Tiberius was not simply to depose those he did not like, but to kill them.

The alternative as Pilate saw it was, "Shall I sacrifice my life to save this man's, or his to save my own?" When Christ said to him, "Thou wouldest have no power over me except it were given thee from above," that is, from Tiberius, he saw in the procurator a subaltern frightened by tremendous temptation, fettered by his fears, afraid to do his duty. Therefore he was less guilty than Annas, who dared to do as he liked. More and more clearly it will appear as we advance from step to step of our Lord's so-called trials, that in each of them it was not he, but his judges, who were on trial. Each of them in succession was judged by him and compelled to confess by words or acts the justice of his verdicts. He had told his disciples that he was the Judge of all men, and we can see with what authority he exercised his jurisdiction over Caiaphas and Herod and Pilate. In them first "all men" began to be gathered before the "Son of man" and revealed as sheep

or goats. During the entire sequence nothing occurred to inspire a firmer assurance that the Judge of all the earth will do right, than those words to Pilate, when, making full allowance for every palliating circumstance, he showed that though Pilate was no hero, but a weak and guilty man, more than others directly responsible for the murder of his Lord, his Lord did not forget how hard it was for him to do right.

The first move of the conspirators after the arrest of Jesus was a blunder. They led him to the house of Annas. This was natural, for Annas was the brain of the conspiracy. But he was not the high priest. His son-in-law was. Therefore to preserve the fiction that authority was where it belonged, Annas sent the prisoner instantly to the house of Caiaphas.¹

Of this particular building nothing is known. We assume its resemblance to other wealthy

¹ The silence of the synoptics regarding this visit to Annas is best explained by the fact that the blunder was corrected before anything of importance occurred. The impression that St. John means us to understand that Peter's denial, and other incidents recorded in the eighteenth chapter of the fourth Gospel, took place at the house of Annas has been satisfactorily removed by Professor Andrews on John xviii, 24, of which verse the A. V. probably gives the right meaning.

homes in Jerusalem, as their structure meets the requirements of the narrative.

There was a square paved court into which the apartments of the house opened. On the opposite side of the court, facing the entrance, the large chief chamber, raised a few steps, was entered by a broad arched opening through which most of its interior was visible from the court. Here the ecclesiastics of the conspiracy are collected. They sit upon cushions in a semicircle of which the concave fronts the entrance. Caiaphas occupies the centre. At the tips two scribes with inkhorns and parchments ought to be, and perhaps are, waiting to report the proceedings. Facing Caiaphas, and therefore with his back to the court, stands Jesus. He is bound, but not now between Roman soldiers. Their presence would defile the house.

“The high priest therefore asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his teaching. Jesus answered him, I have spoken openly to the world; I ever taught in synagogues, and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and in secret spake I nothing. Why askest thou *me*?¹ ask them that have heard me, what I spake unto them: behold, these know the things which I said.”²

¹ Italics required by context. ² John xviii, 19, 21, R. V.

And doubtless when Jesus looked upon those scowling priests who the Tuesday before, when he denounced them in words that still burn as fire, had cowered like whipped curs without daring a syllable of reply to "the things which he said," they had small desire to hear those "things" repeated.

Caiaphas knew, and every man present knew, that by these questions the law had been broken. For it did not allow a prisoner to be questioned until he had been accused by responsible witnesses and his asserted crime publicly proclaimed. The law also required that the presiding priest should spend the day preceding the trial in fasting and prayer, and that no trial should be conducted in secret or begin before sunrise. These were some of the laws which all knew had been broken. Christ's reply was a stern arraignment of the high priest for breaking them. Caiaphas was silenced. His baffled rage prompted an official to exclaim: "Answerest thou the high priest so?" smiting, as he spoke, the Master on the mouth with his rod of office. "You are angry, therefore you are wrong." But Christ could not be made angry for himself, because he could not be put in the wrong. He replied: —

“If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?” A second arraignment,—of one for breaking the law which he had been appointed to maintain.

Forced to concede the justice of the rebuke he had received, Caiaphas summoned witnesses. It was too late to make their testimony legal. Still it was the best he could do to varnish his crime. But the testimony of his witnesses did not agree. They made his position worse. The conspirators were routed. The calm judge whom they were trying to convict had judged them and forced them to acknowledge the justice of his verdict. They broke up in angry perplexity. In the face of his rebuke they dared not continue the mock trial. They must at least wait for daylight.

But could they not intimidate him? They set their menials upon him. “Then did they spit in his face and buffet him: and some smote him with the palms of their hands, saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ: who is he that struck thee?”¹

Meantime Peter in the court was warming himself by a brazier of coals. Three times he had denied his relation to his Lord. Three times he

¹ Matt. xxvi, 67, 68, R. V.

had declared, at last with oaths, that he never knew him, when, thinking not of the foes who buffeted his body, but of the friend who stabbed his heart, "the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter."¹ And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

At that point we are accustomed to fancy that Peter's crime ended and his repentance commenced. I think when Peter went out and wept bitterly his chief crime against manhood began. The denials were sudden yieldings to unforeseen temptation. He was frightened and swept away by terror before he thought. But to go forth and spend the time in some safe place, shedding wretched tears while his Master, friendless and forsaken, was buffeted and mocked and spit upon! The denials seem to me venial beside that. Let none of us be caught in the pitiful but common fallacy that tears can wash guilt away. Weeping over wrongs while we have unused power to right them is worse than the wrongs themselves. It only blinds our eyes to the way we should go.

But it is not Peter whom we can afford to be watching now. The dawn hastens on. The baffled conspirators have determined upon their next move. Jesus stands surrounded by spiteful

¹ Luke xxii, 61.

menials; the Lion of the tribe of Judah begirt with vermin. He waits serenely for the approaching and more furious assault of his malignant foes, which shall break upon him only to be shivered into spray as waves when they dash against a rock.

CHAPTER XI

THE SANHEDRIN BEFORE CHRIST

BEFORE continuing the narrative I would again remind the reader that the harmonists are not in agreement about the order in which the incidents of the mock trials occurred. The differences of opinion are, however, of small importance, because they do not change in the least the portrait of Christ.

Let one man read Mark's account, another Matthew's, another Luke's, another John's. Let a fifth read all the four. Each of the five readers will find the impression made upon him by the reported spirit and conduct of Christ a replica in all essentials of that received by each of the other four. The writers aimed solely to show us the Saviour. They cared for nothing else. Neither need we. I follow the order which seems to me the most probable; greatly the most probable. But if I am wrong in the sequence of incidents it matters little; very little. No arrangement of them can blur our view of the Master's behavior, or cloud more than slightly that of his enemies, or of Pilate.

The first attempt to convict Jesus of any kind of misdemeanor failed utterly. The conspirators broke up their session in angry perplexity. Baffled but determined they withdrew to repair and rearrange the broken meshes of their web.

Jesus, bound but victorious, was left alone with the menials who buffeted him, mocked him, spit upon him. An hour, two hours, three hours passed. The conspirators have not been idle. Every man entitled to sit in the Sanhedrin has been summoned to the council that will soon convene. The city sleeps. "The moonlight steeps in silentness" the white walls of the temple, when a band of priests appears in its inner court. They divide into four companies. Each company led by a priest with a silver trumpet ascends the temple wall and marches along its top to one of the four corners of the inclosure. There they stand waiting. The dawn begins to glow. Still they wait. As soon as the sun's rim gleams over the crest of Olivet one trumpet sounds. A second answers it; a third; a fourth. They announce to the slumbering city the advent of the darkest day of history.

"As soon as it was day, the assembly of the elders of the people was gathered together, both chief priests and scribes" (an exhaustive cata-

logue of the members of the Sanhedrin); "and they led him away into their council."¹

If Christ is tried before that council he will have to be acquitted. But Annas and Caiaphas do not mean that he shall be tried before that tribunal. They have arranged their plans adroitly to secure its indorsement while eluding its investigation.

We do not know where the council sat. We know that the law required it to sit in a certain chamber of the temple. But we also know that during the period bounded by Bethlehem and Calvary it frequently sat elsewhere; that in the "trials" of Jesus nearly every legal requirement was disregarded; and that Jesus had declared he would not enter the temple again. I assume therefore that he did not. Wherever it met, we may safely assume that it was full. There were present now not only the conspirators and those controlled by Caiaphas, but all the members of the Sanhedrin. A full attendance was requisite to carry out the plans of the High Priest. A full attendance was also requisite to accomplish the purpose of Christ.

The moral weight of a condemnation enforced by the whole Sanhedrin was needed, for its influ-

¹ Luke xxii, 66, R. V.

ence both upon the fickle populace and upon the Romans, with whom the ultimate decision rested. On the other hand, it was only to the body representing the entire Jewish people that Christ meant to make an official declaration of his claims.

It is probable that Gamaliel and Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were present. The conspirators had laid their plans cunningly to entrap the best men of the nation into an appearance of complicity with their crime, and in doing so they accomplished the will of its victim.

“Blindly the wicked work the righteous will of heaven.”

Jesus stands before the council. For hours he has been subjected to buffetings and mockings. Doubtless it was hoped by such inflictions to undermine that majestic bearing which had forced the arresting mob to their knees and compelled the high priest to ignominious retreat.

Without an instant's delay Caiaphas, breaking the law in order to arouse the prejudice of bigotry upon which he relied, exclaimed: “I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou art the Christ, the Son of God.”¹

¹ Matt. xxvi, 63, R. V.

Jesus replied : " If I tell you, ye will not believe : and if I ask [question] you, ye will not answer." ¹

Then, it seems, the Master paused. It was for the conspirators an anxious moment. If he refuses to reply, as he has a legal right to do and has done once already, their plans will again be thwarted. For now some are present who will not acquiesce in deliberate violation of the law. It is necessary by some sudden stroke to prevent all protests ; to close the lips or at least to drown the voice of any honest man who may attempt to prevent illegal action. Therefore Caiaphas asked the question ; sprung it the instant the prisoner stood before him. There was no call for any member to protest against its illegality, for the first words of Christ's reply indicated that he himself intended to insist upon his rights.

I think Caiaphas panted forth with an eagerness he could not conceal that question : " Art thou the Christ ? Tell us." His face darkens at the words, —

" If I tell you, ye will not believe."

But his glances of quivering anxiety change into a glare of triumph, as the Master continues :

¹ Luke xxii, 67, 68.

“I am : and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.”¹ It was a reference to the words of Daniel, which all present knew applied to the Messiah. Instantly, with frantic eagerness to make assurance doubly sure, the conspirators shriek in chorus, “Art thou the Son of God ?” The whole council, startled and amazed, joins in the question.

Then Jesus Christ, knowing that he was under no legal obligation to answer and could not be compelled to do so ; knowing that the words he spoke meant and would be understood to mean that he claimed divine authority ; knowing that to speak them would cause his death that day by infernal torture ; knowing that his words would be repeated throughout Jerusalem and the whole world ; knowing that they would cause the consummation of the darkest crime that could be committed by the race he came to save from sin, crime the beginning of which had caused his agony in Gethsemane ; knowing that if he spake falsely he would not only delude Nicodemus and Joseph and Gamaliel, but utter a lie that, believed, would in due time make Paul and Peter and Luther and

¹ Mark xiv, 62, R. V.

Beecher and you and me "of all men most miserable," a lie that would give mankind over "to a strong delusion" and make the noblest men and women who have ever lived idolaters and deceivers of the people; knowing that if he spake falsely he would incur a guilt compared with which the treachery of Judas and the sins of Caiaphas would be venial; knowing all this and delaying only long enough to make the weight of the assertion more overwhelming, replied that he was the Son of God, empowered with the full authority of his Father.

Caiaphas leaped to his feet in an ecstasy of gratified malice, feigning horror, saying to himself, "He has said it! He has said it! He has spoken blasphemy," and shouted, "What further need have we of witnesses? Ye have heard the blasphemy."¹ No chance must be risked for questions; no pause for proof; no opportunity for appeal or explanation. He is prepared to prevent all that. He rends his garment, catching it by the collar and tearing it in twain. Clutching also his tunic of white linen, he tears it from his breast, shrieking, "He has spoken blasphemy," and if any voice was raised in protest it was drowned in the preconcerted yell, "He is worthy of death."

¹ Mark xiv, 63; Matt. xxvi, 65ff.

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“Blindly the wicked work the righteous will of heaven.”

We too can repeat the thought and words of Caiaphas, but with accents of uttermost rejoicing:—

“He has said it! He has said it! What further need have we of witnesses?”

After this distinct statement from Christ's own lips I feel no need of proving his divinity by arguments drawn from the resurrection or any other source. All men whose opinions are in the least worth minding are in agreement at last that Jesus was whatever he claimed to be. No one ventures now to accuse him of conscious, still less of deliberate deceit. Ponder the significance of this declaration to Caiaphas and the council. Weigh the tremendous sanctions given to it by the circumstances of the time, and when doubts infect your faith say to yourself, or when honest unbelievers ask, “Why do you believe that Jesus was the unique Son of God?” say to them, “He said it! He said it! What further need have we of witnesses?”

The only view inconsistent with the recognition of Christ's authority over us that remains open to men of respectable intelligence is, either that he has been falsely reported or that he was an honest but self-deceived enthusiast.

That he has been essentially misreported is incredible. We have three reports of what he said, drawn certainly from two and probably from many more independent sources.¹ They were all written by honest men who had access to documents or reports written or spoken by those who were in Jerusalem when the words were uttered. The occasion was so conspicuous and the words were so momentous that their tenor could not have been misunderstood. The three accounts we have of them agree perfectly in meaning.

In John's Gospel we have a fourth testimony, for it affirms that Christ claimed to be all that the synoptics tell us he declared to the Sanhedrin that he was. There is no possible doubt that his disciples believed the same, and that their belief changed the world's history.

The remaining alternative is that Christ was an honest but self-deceived enthusiast, and that he did not claim to be more than man until, swept from self-poise by unexpected popularity, he began to dream that he was what he was not.

If that seems plausible to any one, let him explain how it came about that not until every circumstance that could create or foster such illu-

¹ Luke i, 1-4.

sion had vanished, and almost everything calculated to awaken from golden dreams had begun; not until he stood a prisoner waiting for the cross upon which in the hour of his greatest popularity he had predicted he would die, did he distinctly, verbally, without qualification and under the strongest incentives to speak the truth which we can conceive an honest man to feel; that not till then did he verbally and publicly declare what in private he had often said before — namely, that he was all that his devoutest disciples claim that he is.

Thus the words which Caiaphas seized as a lever to overthrow the influence of the Saviour have become the iron pillar upon which that influence stands immovable.

Without daring to risk the delay which would be caused by taking, as the law required, a formal vote of the council; without even pronouncing a formal sentence, which would have enabled Nicodemus or Joseph or Gamaliel to nullify by a protest the whole proceeding; without pausing even long enough for the Scribes to write down an accusation for Pilate's eye, an omission on which, as we shall see, all their plans came near being shipwrecked; relying solely upon the contagion of angry passion to complete their

wicked endeavors, the conspirators broke up their session with that tumultuous cry: "He has said it," "He has spoken blasphemy," and hurried Christ to Pilate. Of course they had no idea of repeating that charge to *him*, for they knew that he would treat it with contempt, and that it could not stand for a moment in any Roman court. Some other charge must be invented for the procurator, as he alone had power to pronounce and inflict the penalty of death.

CHAPTER XII

PILATE BEFORE CHRIST

A TWO-PRONGED tooth lying on its side, the crown to the north, would represent roughly the original topography of Jerusalem. With the eastern prong, on which the temple stood, we have at present no concern. The western prong was cut in two by a ravine running nearly east and west. Along the south edge of this ravine at a very early period a strong military wall was built. In the time of Christ the ravine had been filled in, so that only a slight depression remained to show where it had been, but the wall was still kept in repair. South of that protecting barrier, swelling to an elevation higher than any other part of the city, arose the traditional Mt. Zion. Behind the western section of the wall, on the north slope of Zion,¹ Herod the Great built his celebrated palace and surrounded it with

¹ Here and in what follows the word "Zion" is used for brevity to denote the traditional Zion. Whether it was the real Zion, there is here no need of discussing.

groves and gardens extending unknown distances southward and eastward. To make it still more secure he strengthened the old wall by three structures called "towers," which when properly manned were believed, and by the siege of Titus were proved, to be impregnable to any mode of attack known in those days. They were not only fortresses. They were also castles of residence furnished lavishly with appliances for luxurious living. Built of enormous blocks of polished white marble so deftly fitted together without mortar that their lines of junction were said to be invisible, these superb specimens of architecture prepared the visitor for the splendors of the palace itself. One of them Herod named Hippicus after his friend, another Phasælus after his brother, the third Mariamne to perpetuate the name of the wife he murdered.

Of the palace itself the only description we have is extremely vague.¹ Josephus wrote with more than his usual veracity when he affirmed that to describe it exceeded his ability. From his excited gasps of bewildered admiration it is possible to make out that the central building, fronting north, embraced with two vast wings like curving arms an open court. The court was

¹ Josephus, *Ant.* xv, 9. 3; *Bel. Jud.* v, 4. 4.

probably paved with variegated marbles. To flatter the emperor one of the wings was named Cæsarium and the other Agrippinum, after the emperor's favorite and son-in-law. A flight of marble steps descended from the main entrance into the court. We are told also that there were chambers large enough to accommodate a hundred guests; that the ceilings and rafters were of precious woods adorned—it may perhaps mean plated—with gold; that the furniture was indescribably magnificent; the variety and splendor of the statues beyond praise; the vessels (probably those for the table) all of gold and silver; that the gardens were threaded with canals and adorned with bronze statues which spouted water; that there were groves of trees with long walks between them, and many cotes of tame doves. The description is mainly a succession of panting expletives suggesting a jumble of porticoes and pillars and towers and greenery and statues in bronze or marble and cedar wood and gold and silver, to which the most kaleidoscopic intellect might strive in vain to give an appearance of definite arrangement.

Our knowledge of the perfection to which the Romans had brought the art of landscape gardening makes it safe to assume that the grounds

were enriched by exotic plants and trees, among which singing birds and birds of brilliant plumage were at home. The horror felt by the Jews at Herod's pagan practices suggests that some at least of the bronzes were fauns and dryads like those in the famous gardens of Antioch. It is probable that the presence of such heathen idols intensified the feeling which made the conspirators shrink from entering the prætorium, "lest they should be defiled."¹ It is possible, however, to discern through the misty confusion the central building and the marble steps which descended into the court inclosed by the two great wings of the palace. That is all we need to see, for in this court Pilate's judgment seat was placed, and on these steps the Saviour stood when Pilate said, "Behold the man." The gardens also should be remembered, for in them were plucked the reed that smote and the thorns that crowned him.

The genius for justice which made the Romans the world's accepted lawgivers led them to court publicity in judicial procedures. For this reason verdicts were pronounced in the open air, and from an elevation which enabled the public to see and hear. In accordance with this custom a platform was raised in the court. It was called

¹ John xviii, 28.

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the Gabbatha or Pavement, and was covered with tiles of various colors, in imitation of the forum at Rome.¹ Upon this platform the curule chair or "judgment seat" was placed. Simply shaped, it resembled a camp stool adorned with ivory and gold. Upon it Pilate sat between two officials (that is, if he obeyed the law which required their presence) when he surrendered to the mob.

To this superb palace of Herod the conspirators hurried Jesus. They would not enter it themselves. To do so would disqualify them for the paschal feast on the evening of that day. Pilate therefore came out to meet them.

It may be safely assumed that this was not the first intelligence he received of Christ. He had, as I have shown,² abundant cause to watch the behavior of the people at their festivals, and in all probability had come to Jerusalem to be on hand in case of a rebellious outbreak. In view of what is known of him it is not credible that the public entry and the words of our Lord in the Royal Porch had escaped his notice. His own experience had given him cause to be especially suspicious of Galileans, and Christ was a Galilean. Moreover, unless his wife had heard and thought much of him, she would not have

¹ John xix, 13.

² Chapter 2, page 24.

been dreaming of Jesus or calling him "that righteous man," at a time when all audible voices were calling him "that malefactor." It is not probable that the wife of a Roman procurator had sources of information superior to those of her husband.

The contempt of the Jews, which had more than once led Pilate to treat them in a way perilous to himself, together with a dawning appreciation of the character of Jesus, is revealed in his first question to the conspirators:—

"What accusation bring ye against this man?"

The question gives them pause. They had brought no written indictment. They know not what to say. Baffled and enraged they stammer the reply: "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him to thee."

When we remember how often Pilate had treated these men as the worst of malefactors for instigating what he regarded as treason, the exquisite irony of his reply flashes into view:—

"Then take him and judge him according to your law"; that is, "If he is a malefactor, you will know more about it than I."

This was a dismissal of the case. Stung by the sneer and furious at the prospect of losing

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their victim (for, as I have said, they had no power to inflict a death sentence; that Rome alone could do), they broke forth into clamors which show how keenly they felt the taunt. They saw the necessity of inculpating Jesus in a way that shall exculpate themselves. Therefore the cry: "We found this man perverting our nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself is Christ a king."

Instantly at those words Pilate's manner changed. Doubtless our Lord's answer to the Herodians about the tribute money had been correctly reported to him. But perhaps those words can be misreported to Tiberius in a way which will threaten serious consequences. He must guard against that peril. False as he knows the charge to be, he dare not dismiss it lightly. Others are listening, and this is no matter for the open air. He withdraws into the Praetorium and summons the prisoner to him.

For the first time Jesus entered a royal abode, and that one of the most imposing in the world. Upon a pavement of tessellated marbles, beneath polished rafters of precious wood flashing with plates of gold, he stands to be cross-questioned by the most powerful man he has ever met;

the representative of the mightiest monarch on earth. Will the Carpenter of Nazareth be awed by these splendors? Will he blench in this presence?

“Art thou the King of the Jews?”

What is more marvelous than Christ's reply? As if the august questioner were the guilty woman standing before him at the well of Samaria, Christ puts the monarch on trial and summons him to his defense. Without the slightest reference to himself or his claims, and having no need that any man should tell him what was going on in Pilate's soul,—for he knew what was in man,—Jesus replied in words which mean, “Do you ask this question because you have any doubt about the facts, or because you have been frightened and are playing the coward with your conscience?”

“Sayest thou this of thyself, or did others tell it thee concerning me?”

That is, “Are you obeying your sense of duty or yielding to slanders you know to be false?”

Then, as weak men generally do when conscience accuses and they dare not confess, Pilate lied.

“Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the

chief priests delivered thee unto me : what hast thou done?"

That is, "How can I know anything about you except what these accusers have told me?" And it is certain that he did know a great deal about him that the accusers had been careful not to tell.

Christ pricked the lie by again giving voice to the struggle it had been spoken to conceal:

"My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."¹

That is precisely what Pilate had been saying to himself, and it had convinced him of the prisoner's innocence. Had he known no more of Jesus than present circumstances showed, or than the Jews had told him; had he known only that Jesus was a fettered prisoner accused by his countrymen of sedition, without a friend, a servant, or a soldier, those words would have appeared to the procurator simply ludicrous. They would have seemed the bubbles of bombast or the ravings of insanity.

¹ John xviii, 34-36, R. V. See also Mark xv, 10; Matt. xxvii, 18.

But if Pilate was thinking of that day, so recent, when all Jerusalem "was stirred" by this man's arrival, and seemed ready to fight if he would let them; of those scenes in the temple which showed the immensity of the prisoner's moral influence; of the arrest and the instantaneous rebuke of the servant who did fight "that he might not be delivered to the Jews"; such thoughts may well have caused the agitation betrayed by the involuntary exclamation, "Thou art then a king!"¹

It was a complete surrender of the pomp and power of this world to the inherent majesty of Christ. As such the Master received it.

"Thou sayest it, because I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

"To bear witness unto the truth"; as he was doing then and there. "Every one that is of the

¹ John xviii, 37. Not a question, but, as appears from Christ's response, an affirmation. See Thayer, "*οὐκοῦν* and *οὐκουν*," which leaves the reader free to judge whether the words were an interrogation or an affirmation. The context seems to me to demand the latter. Pilate had already asked the question (verse 33) and had no reason to repeat it.

truth heareth my voice"; as Pilate was doing then and there.

"Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?"

Lord Bacon never uttered a syllable which proved more convincingly that he was not Shakespeare, because he lacked Shakespeare's knowledge of the human heart, than when he called this exclamation the "question of jesting Pilate." Never was man in less mood for jesting. The words were forced from Pilate's lips by an influence to which he had never yielded before, the influence that had mastered his soldiers at the gate of Gethsemane. "What power is this that compels me to take part against myself?" For when he spoke this he was ready for the moment to dare great risks for the truth. He went forth and, though aware of the danger he incurred by doing so, pronounced a complete acquittal.

"I find no crime in him."¹

At that the conspirators renewed their clamor. They were the more fierce, saying, "He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, *beginning from Galilee.*" "Galilee," the hot-bed of treason! Again Pilate quakes. He cares nothing for these Jews. But he fears Tiberius. He is no longer alone with Christ. That word "Gal-

¹ John xviii, 38, R. V.

ilee" pierces his ear. He had forgotten that Jesus was a Galilean. And Herod the tetrarch of Galilee is in the city. "Let him have the responsibility I dare not take."

In two ways Pilate can help himself by turning the case over to Herod. They have quarreled about the boundaries of their respective jurisdictions. It will be a graceful concession to Herod, and he knows that Herod is a favorite of Tiberius. But more than all, it will relieve him from doing what he knows he ought to do and dare not. Therefore "he sent him unto Herod."

When that miscreant saw Jesus "he was exceeding glad; for he was of a long time desirous to see him, because he had heard concerning him; and he hoped to see some miracle done by him. And he questioned him in many words; but he answered him nothing."¹

There had been a time when the name of Jesus made Herod quake, for he had said that John the Baptist, whom he had beheaded, was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works did show forth themselves in him.² But Herod has killed his conscience and quenched in debauchery the last spark of his manhood. His crimes no longer trouble him. He can welcome as a

¹ Luke xxiii, 8, 9, R. V. ² Mark vi, 14; Luke xiii, 33.

juggler, to amuse an idle hour, the friend of the friend he has foully murdered.

But when the Master gives no heed to his questions, Herod's spite flames. Remember that he was the only human being toward whom our Lord is recorded to have shown an emotion which can be construed as contempt. Nothing else enrages a man who knows he deserves to be despised so much as the consciousness that he is despised. It would be strange if some one courting royal favor had not heard and reported those words, "Go and tell that fox," quoting their tenor as a justification for the deed when "Herod sought to kill him." The Master's silence may have recalled that epithet, and the warning to beware of the leaven of his influence. It is probable also that Herod wished to pour contempt upon the fears he once had felt by deriding the man who had inspired them. There was an irony in the mockery he devised which implies as much.

It was the custom at Rome for those who sought public offices to put on white robes—emblem that their aims were as pure as their garments—and walk through the Forum and Campus Martius soliciting votes. They were called "candidates," that is, "white-robed ones."

Herod was a coward. He dared not say, "This man is a rebel against Cæsar because he called me a fox, and warned his followers to beware of my influence, and will not speak to me." But he could frame no other accusation. Therefore he vented his spite by an attempt to make the prisoner appear ridiculous. Parodying the well-known custom, he sent the Saviour back to Pilate robed in white. It was a jeering way of saying, "I nominate this candidate for sovereignty. He solicits votes."

But Pilate read the mocking aright. He saw in it only the assurance that Herod could find no fault in him.

CHAPTER XIII

PILATE BEFORE CHRIST

II

DUTIES shirked are not escaped. They return with demands more exacting and more difficult to meet, for every evasion of righteous obligations weakens one's ability to obey them.

Again on the morning of that day which will appear the Black Friday or the Good Friday of all time, according as we view it through the eyes of Judas or of John, Christ returned to Pilate. The white robe which advertised Herod's spite brought a new proof of the prisoner's innocence, but it also showed the procurator that a just verdict would embitter the enmity of the treacherous tetrarch against himself. And he had reason to count that miscreant a favorite of Tiberius. But something suddenly occurred to ease the governor's anxiety and make him think that Providence had smiled upon his cowardice.

At his first interview with Jesus that morning, only the conspirators and their minions appear to have been present. The accusations and the

clamors against the prisoner came from them. Pilate spoke to them as if no others were within hearing, and their own expression, "He stirreth up the people," implies that the people were not there to speak for themselves.

But now Pilate sees a multitude surging up the broad avenue toward the palace. They will soon fill the court, and he knows why they come. It is to solicit the release of some prisoner, a boon which at the passover Jerusalem is accustomed to ask and Rome to grant. That seems to open for him a way of escape. These petitioners are the men who only five days ago hailed Jesus with hosannas, and waved palms and spread their garments before him. He knows that "for envy" the priests have accused the prisoner. The natural inference is, "I have only to appeal to these newcomers, and the prisoner is safe."

Before he can act on that conviction the conspirators themselves come to his aid. With amazing effrontery, utterly reckless of the professions of loyalty to Cæsar they have just made and mean to make again, they incite some among the people to demand the release of Barabbas. Pilate's use of what seemed to him that blunder was, as politicians judge, exceedingly sagacious.

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Barabbas was a notorious rebel. That made him specially obnoxious to Tiberius. But he was also a robber and assassin. There were many in those troubled times who made patriotism a cloak for the foulest and most brutal enormities. Pretending to have at heart their country's deliverance, they broke into the houses of the rich, murdered and robbed indiscriminately Jews and Gentiles who seemed to have anything worth stealing, and created reigns of terror in the regions where they worked. They were feared and execrated by all save those who profited by their crimes or shared in their excesses. Barabbas is characterized in the Gospels as one of the worst of these bandits.

To procure a popular vote rejecting the rebel will please Tiberius. To execute the assassin who has terrorized the people will please *them*. If offered opportunity to choose between the man whose name has elicited the execrations of Jerusalem and the man who has inspired its hosannas, there seems no question that they will prefer the latter. At least so it appeared to Pilate. Without a doubt that he will win the good will of the multitude by releasing their favorite, he announces that he has found no fault in Jesus, neither has Herod, and offers

them the alternative between the man he thinks they execrate and the man whom they have hailed as their Messiah.

But Pilate did not understand, what Jesus at the fig tree had carefully explained to the Twelve, that the crowd had welcomed him only because they mistook him for one who could and would accomplish all and more than all that Barabbas had pretended, and that some doubtless believed he meant, to do. For this reason Pilate could not anticipate that when they saw him whom they had expected to follow in a career of victorious rebellion an unresisting prisoner in the hands of their oppressors, they would think him an impostor or a traitor and turn against him with all the fury of thwarted passion.

Therefore the savage roar, "Not this man, but Barabbas," smites the procurator with dismay. I suppose the one man utterly astonished when not only the conspirators and their minions, but the whole populace, demanded Barabbas, was Pontius Pilate. In the twinkling of an eye his plan is shipwrecked. He dares not withdraw his offer. To refuse what the whole city clamors for will be reported to Tiberius as a repetition of the offense for which he had been rebuked when his patron was the em-

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peror's favorite. Such a charge will be fatal now. He tries to persuade the mob. He reminds them of the welcome they had so recently given to Christ. In vain. They only shout in answer, "Crucify him ! Crucify him !"

While Pilate, utterly surprised and bewildered, listens to that murderous yell which without a moment's warning brought back all his fears, he hears, piercing through it like the hiss of a cobra, the shrill scream of the conspirators : "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend."

Twice he has failed in Balaam-like attempts to secure the results of right-doing without doing right. He will make a third attempt.

It must be, he is sure, that the people have been overborne by the influence of their priests. No other supposition can explain a change in their temper so swift and so complete. Only five days have passed since they worshiped the victim for whose crucifixion they are clamoring. In a flash he conceived a plan marvelously adroit ; a plan which, if it worked as he hoped it might, would propitiate the people, withdraw from them for a time the priestly influence, and give another opportunity for the release of Jesus. The plan was desperate, but

its success seemed possible. To a Pilate it might appear promising. He will release Barabbas — or engage to do so. That will put the populace in better humor. He will deliver Jesus to be scourged. That was known to be the preliminary of crucifixion. The conspirators, who were the priests, will understand it to be so. The sentence will convince them that their object — the death of Christ — has been secured, and, knowing that to enter the palace gates and witness the scourging or to take part by their presence in the act of crucifixion would disqualify them for the remaining duties and privileges of the day, they will withdraw, as soon as they hear the order given.

When they have gone, an appeal can be made to the pity of the people. Therefore Pilate, who had said in vain to the accusers and the mob, “I will *chastise* [that is, warn or discipline] him and let him go,” now says to himself, “I will *scourge* him and let him go.”

So Pilate delivered Jesus to the soldiers to be scourged.

It was a terrific torture. They tied our Lord's hands together. They bound them to a pillar so low that his back bent over it. They bared his body to the waist. Two soldiers, one on

either side, each with a thong of twisted bull's hide in which flints were inserted, lashed the quivering flesh, the long thong curling around the victim at every stroke.

Horrible as the Roman scourging always was—and it is said few survived forty strokes—there seems to have been an exceptional brutality in the treatment of Jesus by Pilate's soldiers; not in the scourging itself, but in the mockery that followed it. The causes of this have not been explained. I think there were three.

1. The scourging was usually conducted in the presence of the judge who pronounced the verdict. With Christ that appears not to have been the case.

2. It is probable that the soldiers who scourged and mocked the Saviour were the same who arrested him the night before. If not the same, they were their comrades. But those who arrested him had been so awed by his majestic bearing that they fell upon the ground and worshiped him. Their associates were in all probability aware of that fact, and it had inspired in them disturbing apprehensions.

Did you ever observe a child who had been terrified by mistaking a white pillow for a ghost, when assured of his error, attempt to vindicate

his valor and try to convince himself that he had not been scared, by pounding the pillow contemptuously? Have you never seen a small rebel, suddenly reduced to order by the appearance of his supposed parent, break forth in more riotous self-assertion the instant he discovered that the new-comer was not the parent he feared, but the nurse who feared him? Even Christian felt an impulse to mock the lions which had terrified him, when he saw that they were chained.

When those soldiers were convinced that the being at sight or thought of whom they had trembled as before a demigod, was only a friendless man, angry with themselves for having bowed to pretensions which now seem baseless, they would have been tempted to avenge themselves by mocking him. "Nothing," says Sir Walter, "nothing makes men more pitiless than the recollection of recent fears."

3. But more than all, I think, they were enraged because they could not make the Master flinch or show the slightest sign of fear. It was because his son would neither wince nor whimper, that the parent whose memory Helen Hunt has embalmed in execration whipped his own child to death.

When the soldiers had scourged him, they put upon him a robe which by its color suggested the imperial scarlet; they tore a branch from one of the thorn trees in the garden, twisted it so that the projecting spines formed a rude imitation of the golden spikes of the "*corona radiata*," with which the Romans adorned their statues of demigods, and placed it on his head; between his palms, which were bound together, they thrust a reed for sceptre; then knelt before him; plucked the reed from him, smote him with it, thrust it again between his hands.

Then Pilate led him forth, bleeding, crowned with the twisted thorn branch, wearing the scarlet robe, and said to the angry, waiting mob:—

"Behold the Man."

Never was appeal to pity more futile. And that for three reasons.

1. The conspirators had not left. They had probably spent the time lashing the fury of the mob.

2. It was because Jesus had chosen to become an unresisting prisoner, when they expected him to be an irresistible warrior, that the people were enraged at him. The sight of him thus bound and helpless goaded them to madness.

3. But more than that, I do not believe there

was ever a moment in the life of Christ when it would have been possible for those who were near enough to see him as he was to pity him.

Pity implies a consciousness, in him who feels it, of being in some way superior to the object of his compassion, and I do not believe it was in the power of his persecutors with their scourges and nails and spears so to mar Christ's visage or maim his form, that any man or woman who ever lived could have gazed upon and pitied him.

In the whole New Testament I can find but once so much as a suggestion that any human being—and there were many who loved him more than life—manifested toward him an emotion that can be called pity, or even an approach to it.

When the daughters of Jerusalem, beholding him from afar on the way to Calvary, bewailed and lamented him, their emotion was rebuked by the words:—

“Weep not for me.”¹

In the tenderest appeals of the epistles, the writers, I think, never dreamed of so represent-

¹ Luke xxiii, 28. But they were behind him. When he turned, if they were near enough to “see him as he was,” were they not awed?

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ing Christ's sufferings, or so exhorting their readers, as to make it possible for them to feel compassion for the Man of Sorrows. Isaiah could do it, but Isaiah never saw him.

The more I study the New Testament—refusing to be guided by the poets, the painters, and the hymn-books—the more vividly I appreciate that while *for* us his heart was always brimming with compassion, *in* us he inspires and *from* us he can accept only humble reverence, love unfeigned, and boundless admiration.

You cannot pity your conscience. You can fight it or obey it; you can fly from it or kill it. But you know that it is greater than you, and that while you are killing it, you are the one to be pitied. Christ, the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, was conscience made visible. Pilate himself could not pity him. For when the Jews shouted as they beheld the mocked and lacerated Majesty, and—because they were so made that, like other men, they must either worship him or kill him—shouted again, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” and mingling with the curses arose the cry, “He makes himself the Son of God,” Pilate knew that he was divine.

Though trained from his birth to worship

physical force, trained in a religion which considered thunderbolts the only appropriate emblems of deity and regarded the idea of a suffering god no less absurd than that of a black star, when Pilate looked upon the thorn-crowned, bleeding Christ, Pilate knew he was divine.

He entered again with Jesus into the palace; asked with an awe greater than at the earlier interview, "Whence art thou?"

"But Jesus gave him no answer." His heart swells with compassion for the distracted monarch in whom he sees only the sinning slave. Those blood-drops that stain the marble floor are shed for such as he.

"Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and I have power to crucify thee?" Torturing confession of one who knows his duty and knows he dare not do it. Infinite pity, infinite patience, infinite love replied, "Thou wouldest have no power against me, except it were given thee from above. Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin."¹

¹ That is, Tiberius. See page 150. But if the *ἀνωθεν*, "from above," signifies — as many think — "from heaven," the spirit which said, "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more," is no less obvious. For the meaning becomes,

Was not that the utterance of one fit to be the judge of all the earth? So at least Pilate thought, for upon this he sought to release him. But again he blenched before the cry, "If thou let this man go, thou art no friend of Cæsar."

He has at last ascended the judgment seat, and Christ stands before him. At that moment the message from his wife is brought to him, "Have thou nothing to do with that¹ righteous man, for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him."

In that message Pilate sees a gleam of hope. While the Jews shout, "Crucify him," "Thou art not Cæsar's friend," "He calls himself the Son of God," he hears that his wife has dreamed about this Wonderful One. That tells him the heavenly Powers have begun to interfere. For the last stronghold of religion in pagan Rome was faith in the divine origin of dreams.² The "You are less guilty because you are sinning against less light." Many and few stripes. Moncure Conway, whose reading on the subject was exceptionally large, assured me that so far as he knew these were the only words ever spoken or written in palliation of Pilate's guilt.

¹ Does not the "that" imply previous discussion of Christ between the procurator and his wife?

² Plutarch, "Discourse on the Dæmon of Socrates," *Morals*, 17. 18, vol. ii, p. 401; *Symposiasts*, question 10, vol.

conviction that God is on his side makes a strong man stronger to do right. But it often makes a weak man weaker. It fosters the feeling that he can safely leave the issue to the unseen and higher Powers. So it affected Pilate. He has feebly tried himself to rescue Christ. Three times he has pronounced him innocent. He has tried to throw the responsibility for whatever comes on Herod, and has failed. He has tried to persuade the people, and has failed in that. Now he will leave all to God. But first he will make one more impotent attempt to influence the mob. The appeal to pity has increased his trouble. It forced him to worship the man he wished the people to commiserate. While his lips faltered, "Behold the Man," his heart thundered, "Behold the God." But when pity dies, pride often survives. He will appeal to that. It is his last attempt to do his duty. He cries, "Shall I crucify your king?" The man whom only five days ago you hailed as such? But they shout back, "We have no king but Cæsar."

iii, p. 432, Goodwin's Translation. — Pausanias, book 10.2 and 38; book 5.23; Suetonius, *C. J. Cæsar*, 81; Dio Cassius, 72, 7; Friedländer, *Sittengeschichte*, vol. iii, p. 532; *Enc. Brit.*, art. "Dreams"; Brand's *Popular Ant.*, vol. iii, *Dic. of Dreams*. The last, referred to in the *Enc. Brit.*, I have not consulted.

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When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man. See ye!"¹

Did Shakespeare hear the splash of those water drops when he saw Lady Macbeth trying to cleanse her hands?

It was an appeal to the justice of heaven; the coward's way of leaving the higher Powers to do what he knows he ought to do himself. So the people understood it. As such they accepted it. They shouted back in reckless insanity of rage, "His blood be upon us and our children." Then Pilate delivered him to them to be crucified. I have no doubt that, impressed as he was by the personality of Christ, he cherished a sickly hope that some unseen Power would interfere in behalf of such a victim.

"His blood be upon us and our children."

Thirty years have passed. Pilate has vanished in the oblivion which waits for cowards. In the splendid court, on the judgment seat

¹ If the text of the Authorized Version is correct, he used the exact words of his wife's message, but the R. V. also makes it plain that he thought he was following her advice.

from which he heard that cry, Gessius Florus is seated. The court is crowded by terrified inhabitants of Jerusalem. The chief priests and rulers of the people are there. Some are in sack-cloth. The garments of all, rent by their own hands, proclaim the agony of their apprehension. These are those or the offspring of those who shouted, "His blood be upon us and our children." They are not now demanding the life of one whom "for envy" they have accused. They are pleading for their own, and they plead in vain. For it is they and their children whom the procurator now will "deliver to be crucified." By his order the soldiers trample the helpless citizens beneath their horses' hoofs; they break into private houses; they seize all treasures they can find, sparing neither age nor sex. Thirty-six hundred were butchered that day. The highest dignitaries in the city, even those who had obtained Roman citizenship and equestrian rank, were scourged and crucified, "a thing never done before."

While the butchery continued, Florus still sitting upon the judgment seat where Pilate had listened to the awful prayer, there bowed before him, perhaps on the spot where Christ had stood when he too heard it, certainly very

near that spot, the most beautiful woman of her time. In powers of fascination the voice of antiquity declares her to have been inferior to Cleopatra alone. The daughter of a king, the sister of a king, the widow of a king, she is yet to be in magnificence, in influence, and in all but name the empress of the world. Her feet are bare. The splendid tresses are shorn from her head. In the trappings of mourning she pleads for mercy upon those and the children of those who shouted, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." But she pleads in vain, and barely saves her own life, chased to her palace by an infuriated soldiery.

Yet this is only the beginning. Florus is bent on pillaging the temple of its enormous treasure. The fanaticism of its worshipers thwarts him in that. He is forced to withdraw after filling the streets with their corpses. But he retreats, swearing vengeance and dealing death at every step.

Thus began the war which, before the generation which crucified Christ had passed, fulfilled the prediction he made to his disciples on the crest of Olivet.¹ It remains to this day — as he declared it would — the unique horror of his-

¹ Matt. xxiv, 21.

tory. The eagles circling above Jerusalem saw the olive grove vanish from Gethsemane, and in its place a thicket of wooden crosses arise. Around the doomed city in every direction, beyond the piercing gaze of those carrion birds, every plant and shrub and tree had disappeared. They also had been replaced by wooden crosses ranged in rank and file like besieging regiments. Nailed to every cross hung one, or the child of one, of those who shouted, "His blood be upon us and upon our children." Twelve hundred thousand Jews were slaughtered before the siege ended. The nation was effaced, and those who survived its dissolution were sold into slavery. When we consider that these miseries were brought upon the chosen people by that spirit against which Christ so often warned them, the spirit which his public entry into Jerusalem was his final effort to cast out, we need no other answer to the question, "If they do these things in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"¹ And when we observe that the destruction of Jerusalem sent his disciples as angels to the far quarters of the earth, to proclaim his gospel in trumpet tones and make his presence appear from the east even to the

¹ Luke xxiii, 31.

west, we shall need no further testimony to the truth of his predictions or the veracity of the writer who reported them.

NOTE on the Crown of Thorns : This should not be confounded with the "diadem" of the Roman emperors. That came from the Orient, and was originally a linen band or a silk ribbon, bound around the temples, with the ends hanging down behind. In later times it was adorned with pearls and gems and adopted as the imperial crown. But there was nothing about it that thorns could suggest. Moreover, though Aurelian wore it occasionally, Constantine was the first to wear it habitually as the badge of office. To confound it with the crown of thorns is therefore an anachronism. The corona radiata was a circle of gold with long sharp spikes like sun rays. Of these the thorns were a mocking parody. From the early times it was used to crown the statues of deities and deified heroes. It was never adopted as the badge of imperial office. The soldiers meant it to ridicule the claims of divinity which they had acknowledged the night before. What plant supplied its material is not known. We know only that it had thorns. From the apparent purpose of the soldiers I infer that the thorns were long and sharp. They bore no resemblance to the pictures the painters have presented. What the painters have given us is an unconscious imitation of the relic brought from Venice to Paris in 1239 A.D.

The following references will be of use to those who wish to pursue the subject further: The Bible Dictionaries, especially McClintock and Strong, art. "Bramble"; Thayer's Dictionary, "Stephanos"; Smith's *Dictionary of Antiquities*, art. "Corona"; Winer, *Biblisches Realwörterbuch*, arts. "Dorn" and "Kleider"; Schaff *in loco*; Friedländer, i, p. 37; H. B. Tristram, *Fauna and Flora of Palestine*.

CHAPTER XIV

THE SPLENDOR OF THE CROSS

THE Hebrew Golgotha — in Latin, Calvary — signifies “the skull,” or “the place of a skull.” There our Lord was crucified. Where it was or whence its name no one knows. From its appellation some have inferred that the spot was the Tyburn of Jerusalem. Some have thought they traced in a hillock near the city the outlines of a human cranium, and have deemed the resemblance sufficient to fix the location and account for the name. We know, however, only that it was a short distance outside of the walls, and that it was called “the skull.”

Accused of sedition and acquitted of the charge, our Lord was immediately treated as if the charge had been proved. He was placed between two criminals who had been convicted of the crime of which he had been acquitted. They were in all probability bandits like Barabbas, who had made pretense of patriotism a cloak for robbery and murder. Classifying the Saviour as one of such—when in fact he was

brought to the cross because he had shown himself to be exactly their opposite, and had, beginning with the public entry, taken every opportunity to warn his countrymen that the methods of Barabbas would lead to their destruction — was a lie even more colossal than any of those by which the conspirators had accomplished their purpose. Yet that lie was by Pilate written large in three languages for all men's reading, upon the placard which was hung about the Saviour's neck and placed above his cross. "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews," signified, "This man is executed for rebellion against Cæsar."

Why Pilate told that lie is not far to seek. He had released Barabbas, the rebel. The fact would soon be known at Capri. That he could not help. But the crucifixion of Jesus, who might be and actually was ¹ represented at Rome as a far more formidable rebel, could be used as an antidote to the suspicions sure to be injected into the mind of Tiberius by the pardon of a criminal for whose release the people clamored. The conspirators also appear to have been looking toward Capri, for they petitioned Pilate to change the superscription so that it would

¹ Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25.

vindicate them from any charge of complicity with the crucified man, by showing that though he claimed to be king, the Jews had not received him as such. "Write not, The King of the Jews; but, that he said, I am King of the Jews."

Crucifixion was the most ignominious of punishments. It was also the most painful. Preachers have dwelt with terrific emphasis upon our Lord's sufferings on the cross. Painters have strained their powers to depict them. Poets have exhausted the capacity of language to describe them. Saints have gone mad through brooding over them.

Bonaventura's groans and shrieks terrified his brethren when, running to his relief, they found him writhing before the crucifix, unhurt except by thoughts of the Saviour's agony. Francis of Assisi dwelt upon the same theme until spots of congested blood in his palms and side reproduced the marks of the nails and spear. Neither painter, poet, nor saint has exaggerated the tortures inflicted upon our Lord. Imagination cannot do so.

But on the other hand, if you did not know what crucifixion was; if you had never heard a sermon, seen a picture, or read a poem repre-

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senting Christ upon the cross; if you had no source of information save the four Gospels, you would infer from their narratives that crucifixion was an almost painless death. They record but one fact which could suggest that it was not: the cry, "My God; why hast thou forsaken me?" But no one dreams of attributing that cry to physical pain.

Instead of groans or even silence, which is the utmost victory of fortitude over consciousness of suffering, we hear from the Crucified One a prayer of compassion for the crucifiers; a promise of salvation; an utterance of tender care for his mother; an expression of unfaltering faith in his Father; all spoken as calmly as if he were still in the Upper Chamber; spoken so calmly that one of the acutest of scholars felt obliged to dismiss the narrative as a fiction, because he thought it self-evident that no one racked by tortures so excruciating could have spoken so serenely.

Further, if you will examine the New Testament carefully, I think you will find no single passage which emphasizes the physical agony of Christ upon the cross, or tends to correct the impression left upon the mind by the Gospels, namely, that the physical sufferings of our

Saviour were inconsiderable. The New Testament writers emphasize the ignominy of the cross and the sufferings of our Saviour for others. But at his physical sufferings they scarcely hint. Whips and nails and spears can make us suffer for ourselves, but only the spirit of Christ can make us suffer for others.

Whom then shall we trust? The inspired writers or the uninspired preachers, poets, painters? The men who wrote before a generation had passed, and who must have been intimate with some who had witnessed the crucifixion and may very probably have seen it themselves, or the men who drew their conclusions either from observing the usual behavior of those under similar tortures, or from looking at Calvary through the intervening mist of centuries?

There can be but one reply. Christ did not feel upon the cross that physical agony of which another in his place would have been conscious, because he rose heaven-high above it. The joy of enduring for others quenched the fires of physical pain. If we can appreciate that fact, the cross will appear to us as it appeared to Paul, what it *was*, the consummation of Christ's life, the supreme victory of redeeming love. He triumphed "over them in *it*."

We all have experienced to some extent the power by which the mind silences the clamors of the body. Many a man has been driven by an aching tooth to the dentist and has found the pain depart before he reached the door. The physical conditions remained unchanged, — the congested veins, the bruised nerves, — but when imagination began to work he ceased to heed them. Fear of the forceps banished consciousness of pain.

I knew an orator who, while pleading with a great audience for a great cause, brought his clenched fist down upon an iron ornament, and continued speaking without a twinge of pain for more than forty minutes. When he left the pulpit his hand was fearfully swollen; bones in it were broken. Forty minutes, and no twinge of pain had warned him that he had done himself an injury.

I have been told, and, if true, the fact is in line with countless other well-authenticated facts, that for a considerable period before her death Louisa M. Alcott was in charge of a Christian Scientist, and that though Miss Alcott's sufferings had been intense her mind was so wrought upon by her attendant that she became unconscious of them and thought she was getting

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well, until a little before her death, when the mental strain relaxed.

These are specimens of a thousand illustrations which point to the right understanding of our Saviour's cross, and transfigure its charcoal into diamonds.

Christ declared that he came to save our race; that he would complete the work of our salvation by dying upon the cross; that this was the will of his Father, which it was his joy to do, and that to this end he came into the world. You may believe the statement, or you may deny it. You cannot deny that he made it; that he repeated it often and in multifarious ways; and you will not deny that he believed it true. He believed that by dying as he died he was finishing the work given him by his Father to do, and saving a world. In the cross, therefore, he saw the chariot of glory in which, as Paul affirms, he triumphed over the enemies of God and man.

It is hard to be weary. It is harder to be hungry. It is harder still to be thirsty. We are told of an occasion when Jesus was all these. His disciples left him weary and hungry and thirsty. When they returned, he appeared as one who has eaten and drunk and rested. When they

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marveled whence he had been refreshed, he said to them :—

“I have meat to eat that ye know not of. . . . My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

That triumph over the most imperative of physical necessities he found in showing one outcast woman the way of life. But by dying on the cross he believed he was saving a world.

Have you, reader, never knelt by a deathbed on which lay one for whom you would have been glad to die? Aye ! had you felt sure that wounds in your body were giving health to hers, you would have laughed for joy. The fading light rekindling in those eyes, the blanched cheek glowing again, the lips you had thought silenced forever whispering once more your name ; these proofs that by your stripes she was being healed would have banished all consciousness of pain. Many a man and more women are enough like Christ for that. But he knew that he was giving life to a world ; that the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and that by his stripes we should be healed.

Think of these facts. Read the account of the crucifixion by their light, and see how radiant it grows. Every incident recorded flashes a fresh

glory upon the cross, and makes its appeal more irresistible. If a stranger chose to suffer for me, I should be grateful. But if behind the suffering I discerned a mother's love great enough to make the sufferer rejoice in her suffering, how much more tender, spontaneous, and profound would my gratitude become !

What touches me most deeply in the communion cup is not the words, "This is my blood, shed for many !" but that he gave thanks in view of shedding it for us. When he refused the narcotic supplied by the good women of Jerusalem to deaden the pain of the cross, I do not believe he did so to teach us that we ought to endure pain when enduring it would be useless. If I thought that, the statues at Boston and Hartford to the discoverers of anæsthetics would seem to me blasphemous, and our hospitals inventions of Satan. I believe he refused the narcotic because upon the cross he had work to do that required all his faculties, but also because the joy set before him in doing that work was so great that he would not lose it.

CHAPTER XV

CONSISTENCY

“WITH whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”¹

This quotation from St. James draws attention to an attribute which in a mere man would be called “consistency.” In that attribute the behavior of Jesus upon the cross was superhuman.

A few men, a very few, the Winkelrieds, the Cranmers, have, under the stimulus of prodigious excitement, approached for an instant the elevation upon which he rested for hours as serenely as he had sat by the well of Samaria and the table of Simon. For doing so the world has made their names immortal. Mary of Scotland could think of her tire-women while they were robing her for death. But if the axe had taken six hours to complete its work, six times sixty minutes sawing into her flesh, could she have spent all of that time praying or thinking of others without one thought of herself?

¹ “With whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning.” James i, 17, R. V.

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The ruling passion, that which has been the mainspring and molding force of a man's character, though it may have been hidden even from himself all his lifetime, often becomes conspicuous in his dying hour. When the vessel founders, the miser buckles around him the belt of gold which will only sink him faster. Stephen, whose apparently unsympathetic accusations have been hurled back at him in stones, dies praying, "Lay not this sin to their charge." "Kiss me, Hardy," reveals the tenderness and wealth of affection which, perverted into an unlawful attachment to another man's wife, has left the stain on Nelson's memory. "Why do you smile?" asked an attendant when that sunny signal of returning consciousness broke through the coma which for hours had made Henry Ward Beecher as insensible as the dead. "I am thinking how surprised — will be when he gets to heaven and finds me there."

It was a master of truth in fiction who showed us the blasphemous savagery which had dominated Front de Bœuf through his life, breaking forth in full disclosure at the moment of his death. It was a master of truth in fact who tells us how the most righteous of all ancient

Gentiles, after drinking the hemlock, could not die till he had said: "Krito, I owe a cock to Æsculapius. Will you remember to pay the debt?"

But the death of Jesus was a perfect miniature of his life.

1. His silence on the cross. The rabble jeered. The passers by wagged their heads and cried, "Hail, King of the Jews." Scoffers shouted, "If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross." One of the malefactors sneered, "If thou be the Son of God, save thyself and us." Every taunt that malice could invent rang in his ears. They provoked no syllable of response. It was not because the eyes that looked on Peter, dimmed by approaching death, failed to see the wagging heads. It was not because the ears that first heard the cock crow were deaf to the curses. His eyes were quick to discern in the tumultuous crowd his mother and the disciple whom he loved. His ears were alert to catch the whisper of the penitent thief. It was a silence evincing the same spirit which made him stoop down and write with his finger on the ground, as if deaf to those who sought to entrap him, till for the woman's sake he said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone

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at her.”¹ It was a silence born of the spirit which said to the carping Pharisee, “Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things”; which was dumb when questioned by guilty Caiaphas and shameless Herod, and refused to answer Pilate until Pilate had been prepared to profit from a reply.

2. The refusal of the narcotic revealed the man who, fed by meat his disciples knew not of, found hunger satisfied, thirst quenched, and weariness rested, by helping a fallen woman out of her sins. It was the man who, absorbed in satisfying the demands of his spirit, knew not that his body was an hungered till, after forty days without material food, his soul had been satisfied.

3. But he said, “I thirst,” and drank the vinegar.

Yes! just as he accepted the services of the women who ministered to him of their substance; just as he accepted the hospitality of Levi and Simon; just as he had always appeared—not like John the eremite—but eating and drinking, with absence so complete of

¹ Though the report of the incident recorded in John viii, 2-11 may not belong there, I have no doubt the incident occurred.

all taint of asceticism that men dared to call him "a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber."

When he was thirsty he drank. When hungry he ate. When weary he slept, unless there was reason for fasting or waking. There appears to have been nothing peculiar even in his apparel. He was distinguished from other men by moral and mental qualities alone. So when thirsty he drank the vinegar.

4. There was one thing which, had it been the only one, would have marked him as different from all prophets and teachers who had ever lived. It was a distinction which his influence has already made less striking to us than it was to those who saw him, and is making us every year slower to appreciate. I mean the respect in which he held all women, and his tender sympathy with their special trials. It was not reverence for *some* women. The Greeks had that. There were women whom they honored more than men. Lina Eckenstein has shown that some of the Teuton tribes considered women the superiors of men. But neither Greek nor Teuton had the least reverence for those qualities which are distinctively feminine. It was the abnormal in women to which they bowed. The Greeks bent the knee before her whom in-

sanity had unsexed into a Mænad or a Pythoness. The cry of the Valkyrie and the sword of the Druidess compel us to see in that same seed the origin of the northern pseudo-chivalry. But neither Greek nor Teuton apprehended in the least the worth of the treasure which can be truthfully called "a lady." Christ was the first to do that. He saw in woman neither a toy nor a tyrant, but a helpmeet for man, exactly as he saw in man a helpmeet for woman. He treated each with equal honor. He made himself as familiar with the bread-maker as with the pearl-merchant. What he taught men in the parable of the mustard-seed, he repeated for women in the parable of the leaven. In presenting the lilies as the model for our faith, he said for the men, "they toil not," for the women, "neither do they spin."

Of his two profoundest and, to those of his time, most amazing theological revelations, one was made to a nameless woman at the well of Samaria, the other to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. His teachings were as carefully adapted to the one sex as to the other. This had never been done by any religious teacher before him. Even Paul, though immensely in advance of the current conceptions of his contemporaries, was

able to follow him in this respect only "afar off." But while recognizing the capacities of woman and her need of his help exactly as he did those of men, Christ showed an appreciation of her peculiar trials and a delicate consideration of the disadvantages which the superiority of men in brute force had put upon her, equally unprecedented and equally amazing. Who in all the world but Christ would have remembered, when confronted with a brazen-faced female, that for a woman to be seen alone with a stranger compromised her reputation, and, as if blushing for her who had lost power of blushing for herself, would have said, with a carefulness for her good fame which must have gone far toward restoring her self-respect, "Go call thy husband!"

Nothing wrecks so fast what is left of feminine modesty in one who has committed that sin for which her guiltier copartner is so often flattered and so rarely shunned, as the effort she makes to meet the contemptuous stare which the knowledge of her transgression draws from her accusers. Who but Christ would have stooped down to write upon the ground "as though he heard them not"?¹ And who but

¹ Though the words are not written, they are distinctly implied.

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Christ, when Simon remembered only that "the woman was a sinner," would have remembered only that "the sinner was a woman."¹

That our Lord considered the intellectual capacity of woman equal to that of men was shown at the well of Samaria. His appreciation of her superior moral elevation was manifested at the feast of Bethany. The unfathomable depth of his sympathy with her peculiar sorrows was revealed on the crest of Olivet. Of the predictions spoken there concerning horrors soon to come upon Jerusalem we have three reports. They vary in details. They are alike in this: each tells us that his words of warning and instruction were interrupted once and once only, by an outburst of irrepressible grief. It broke through the calm of his discourse like the jet of a boiling geyser forced through the level by internal fires. It was caused by the thought of what women must suffer from the miseries at hand.

"Woe unto them that are with child and to them that give suck in those days."

Our Lord's only utterance on his way to the cross was elicited by the conduct of women, and it expressed the same appreciation of their spir-

¹ Joseph Parker.

itual insight, the same sympathy with their special trials, which he had always manifested.

To the weeping women he said, —

“ Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For behold, the days are coming, in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck.”

It was the same outburst of sorrow which the disciples heard on Olivet. It was his only mournful utterance that heart-breaking day, and it was wrung from him by the same thought which had caused it before.

There were two going with him to crucifixion. But he did not say, “ Weep not for *us*.” How did he know that the women’s tears were for him alone? Because they were women, and as he had often shown before, in women, in the worst as in the best, he discerned an ineradicable sympathy with the highest.

5. There is another quality which by its prodigious and unfailing abundance distinguished him from all others of our race. It too found supreme manifestation upon the cross. I mean what in another man we should call the cheerfulness and courage of unconquerable hope.

“Let not your heart be troubled.”

“Fear not them that kill the body.”

“These are the beginning of birth-pangs” in view of the unparalleled miseries at hand.

The darker the sky appeared to other eyes, the brighter the stars shone to his. When others said, “It thundered,” he heard angels speak.

So every word upon the cross, — preëminently, as we shall see presently, that last cry, “Why hast thou forsaken me?” was an encouragement to hope, an expression of joy, or an assurance of faith; no syllable from him that expressed discouragement, despondency, or faltering faith; no syllable that even remotely suggested a failure to do what he had long before told his disciples to do — “rejoice when men persecute you.”

6. Crude misunderstandings of a few texts, such as “He that hateth not father and mother,” have partially blinded us to the immense value our Lord put upon the family relations and his own fidelity to them. He used them as the letters divinely given to spell the names of God, of his own relation toward men, of their obligation to him, and their duties to each other.

It is altogether in harmony with all his previ-

ous teaching and example that nearly his last words expressed his tender care for his mother.

7. We are familiar with the expressions which affirm that Christ suffered not for himself but for others. Indeed, we are so familiar with them as almost to have forgotten their meaning. I have already touched upon the great fact.

His whole life was given, his transcendent power was used, never for himself, always for others. He wrought miracles to relieve in others the pain of a few hours' fasting. To them he was the Father giving them their daily bread. For himself he waited forty days to be fed by the Father who clothes the lilies and gives the sparrows food.

This was a sample of the whole life which was consummated on the cross. As he moved toward it he sorrowed for those whom he forbade to weep for him.

The cross lay upon the ground. His body was stretched upon it. A soldier held an iron spike upon his extended palm. Another soldier swung a huge mallet and brought it down, driving the spike through the quivering flesh. At that moment, Dr. Farrar thinks, he prayed, "Forgive them, Father; they know not what they do." Surely he was not thinking of his

torn hands, but of the soldiers who tore them. His suffering was not for himself, but for what they were bringing upon themselves.

They raised the cross. The mob yelled in derision and cursed as they saw the words written above it. But the Saviour, seeing the two he loved best, suffered for the mother leaning upon John. The nails could not make him think of himself. Beside him were two thieves. It may well be that those words to his mother, spoken while they in their agony were full of cursing, made one of them recognize the divinity of the God-man. "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Still alert to relieve the sufferings of others and oblivious to his own.

What then shall we say to these things? Only this. They were the things we expect from him whom we have followed from the Temptations in the Wilderness to the feast at Bethany. In him anything less than these manifestations of superhuman love and power would have seemed amazing and bewildering contradictions.

CHAPTER XVI

TRIUMPH

Hark that cry that peals aloud
Upward through the whelming cloud !
Thou, the Father's only Son,
Thou, his own anointed one,
Thou dost ask him, can it be ?
“ Why hast thou forsaken me ? ”

Lord, should fear the anguish roll
Darkly o'er my sinful soul,
Thou who once wast thus bereft
That thine own might ne'er be left,
Teach me by that bitter cry
In the gloom to know thee nigh.

ELLERTON.

THESE lines express the opinion that Jesus believed his Father had forsaken him, and therefore when we are in any trouble which tempts us to think God has forsaken *us*, the knowledge that Christ felt as we do should give us consolation. This is the prevalent understanding of our Saviour's cry, “ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ”

If I held that view, it would give me the kind of comfort a terrified child might get when, run-

ning to his mother for protection, he found her worse scared than he was. Such a cry would have served well to quiet the conscience of Pilate and confirm the lies of Caiaphas ; but an utterance which proved that the man who had promised to be with him that day in Paradise despaired of getting there himself, could scarcely have strengthened the hope of the penitent thief. To hear the Master, who had told them that he did always the things that pleased the Father and that he and the Father were one, proclaim at last that his Father had forsaken him, would not have increased the disciples' faith in the veracity of their teacher or the unchangeableness of his Father and their Father. But it would have reënforced mightily the contention of those who declared that the Lord was an impostor. In short, such a cry would have convinced all the enemies of Christ that they were right, and would have gone far toward convincing his friends that they were wrong.

There is also in the common view an improbability which seems to me almost insuperable.

The apostle Paul, thinking of a Roman triumph, in which the cross was the chariot of the conqueror who had despoiled principalities and powers, wrote of Christ : " He made a shew of

them openly, triumphing over them in it " (i. e. the cross).¹

The triumph of Trajan after his Dacian victories was the most imposing, and the games attending it the most magnificent, ever seen in the imperial city. Imagine if you can that when Trajan had led the long procession of captives and wagons loaded with spoils through the streets of Rome, at the coronal moment of the pageant, just before he disappeared through the door of the capitol, he had uttered in a voice of agony that penetrated far into the crowd a shriek of despair which proclaimed to all who heard it the consciousness of defeat.

If you can conceive that, you are asked to take another step which is harder still. Believe that the next moment the emperor, Trajan, the bravest, sturdiest man then alive, said : "I take it all back. I shrieked because I was frightened by a phantom."

That is a feeble illustration of the difficulty set before us by those who would have us believe that the Saviour's cry was not a shout of victory, but a wail of despair.

The opinion I am about to challenge is that once, and once only, and then it may be only

¹ Col. ii, 15.

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for an instant, our Lord lost faith in his Father ; thought that God had forsaken him. It assumes that when assailed by an accumulation of unparalleled temptations he became at last for a moment like one of us.

If it were so, we might justly feel for him the same kind of compassionate admiration that Savonarola inspires ; pity for the weakness, admiration for the strength that conquered it so swiftly. But if Christ was like that, consider what follows. Simply this : the ruin of our religion. The foundation of our faith would be not simply shaken, but destroyed. Our hopes would go down as a house built upon the sand.

I. The foundation of our faith is the sinless perfection of Jesus Christ. Other foundation can no man lay. Upon that prophets and apostles built. If one spot or wrinkle or any such thing can be found on him, then are we with St. Paul of all men most miserable. But :

1. If for an instant Jesus Christ lost faith in God, he did at the close of his ministry precisely what the devil three times vainly tempted him to do at its beginning. Were that so—with reverence be it spoken, but spoken it must be—Christ would not have conquered Satan. Satan would have conquered Christ. The cross would

have been not the chariot in which he triumphed over his enemies, and brought gifts to men, but the hearse in which the prince of this world drove to their burial our hopes of salvation.

2. If for one instant Christ distrusted his Father, he was not so strong as he prayed that Peter might be. For he prayed that Peter's faith might not fail, and his own faith, which had never faltered before, broke under the final test.

3. If his cry expressed despair or even grief, if it expressed any sentiment incongruous with joy, he was farther from perfection than he required his disciples to be; for he told them to rejoice and be exceeding glad when men reviled and persecuted and said all manner of evil of them falsely. If therefore he had flinched toward despair under any amount of persecution, he would have become one of those "who say and do not." He would have been one who boasted on Thursday evening and failed to perform on Friday afternoon.

4. If that cry expressed despair or distrust, the Wonderful One ended his life by a deed which flatly contradicted every other word he is recorded to have spoken, and every other deed he is recorded to have done.

5. If he lost, even for a second, faith in God's

care, he fell at least a hair's breadth downwards toward the level of us weak and wicked men, who, when things seem to go wrong for us, when we lose our money, our health, or our friends, repine and moan, "God has forsaken me!"

6. If here he lost faith in God, how is it that in the next breath he said, out of the peace that passeth understanding, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit"?

These considerations do not prove, and I have not mentioned them to prove, that the accepted understanding of the cry is wrong. They prove only that if it is right, Christianity is based upon a falsehood and has no foundation of fact.

It is conceivable, because men have conceived it, that Christ did upon the cross show himself to be less than we believe him to be. I have not therefore written the foregoing to prove that the Saviour's last cry was not an utterance of despair or unbelief. I am trying only to make plain how serious a thing it is to hold that view, and so to win attention to the evidences of its falsity. If Christ despaired for a moment, we must despair forever.

II. There is no intimation that the cry impressed any one who heard it as a wail of weakness or a shriek of despair. All the indications

point the other way ; to an utterance of authority or a note of triumph.

1. No ear mistakes a groan for a pæan or a shriek for a command. Words are not needed to distinguish such expressions. Tears and smiles are the same in Russian, English, Hebrew, and Greek. It would be as easy to mistake the yelp of a kicked cur for the crowing of a cock as to mistake for a command or a shout of triumph the exclamation forced from a man by extremity of horror.

Mark and Matthew both say that some of those who heard the cry, but did not catch the words, said, "He calleth Elias." The word here translated "calleth" is significant. It is used in the New Testament forty-one times, thirty-six times in the Gospels, four in Acts, which were written by Luke, once in the Apocalypse. It always expresses a consciousness of triumph or of authority. It is the only term employed to describe the crowing of a cock, proverbially the most triumphant sound in nature. It is used to describe the voice in which Christ summoned the daughter of Jairus from death and Lazarus from the sepulchre ; to show that even torment had not purged Dives of the pride born of his riches, pride

which made him count it as nothing for the beggar who had lain at his gate to wade through a gulf of fire to do him a service. It indicates the sovereignty of Christ in "calling" his disciples. It describes the tone in which he summoned Bartimæus to be healed, and Mary when she arose quickly and came unto him. So, too, Peter "called" the other disciples to see Tabitha, whom he had restored to life.

They who heard Christ giving orders (as they supposed) in a tone like that to one of the greatest of the prophets, could scarcely have thought it the voice of one who felt forsaken by God. Obeying that unreasoning impulse to do something, scarce knowing what, which often masters men when they hear a command not understood but spoken with irresistible authority, some one ran with the sponge of vinegar, while many waited to see if Elias would come.

The Evangelists — Matthew, Mark, and Luke — are careful to report the signs of victory that followed as if responding to that cry. From the sixth hour darkness had covered the land. But when the cry was heard, the veil of the temple was rent; the earth quaked; the tombs were opened and many bodies of saints that had fallen asleep were raised; the people

who had mocked smote upon their breasts in terror. These are not the signs we should expect to find following a confession of failure.

This is not the place to bring proofs that the things narrated in the Gospels actually occurred. It is enough that the Evangelists thought they occurred, and related them as following that cry, thus making it in the highest degree improbable that they, or any of the men or documents they relied upon, regarded the cry as we have been taught to do.

2. The testimony of the centurion. Remember two facts. 1st. The cross did not elevate its victim high in air, as Rubens has misled us into imagining. It lifted him only a few feet from the ground; not so high as to prevent one standing or even sitting before it from seeing the features and catching their expression as he heard the voice of the Crucified One. 2d. The centurion stood watching Christ.

When the centurion saw that "he so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man is the Son of God." Now many ancient authorities read, "When the centurion saw that *he so cried* and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this is the Son of God." But as the revisers have rejected that reading I do not insist upon it. The

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reading they accept implies all that is stated in the reading they reject. Christ uttered the cry just before he died. To the centurion it was his dying utterance.

That centurion was a Roman soldier. His training had taught him to think of God as the almighty Commander. In his view the most ungodlike of all things was weakness, despair, surrender. But when he saw the expression of Christ's face and heard his last cry — "saw how Jesus died" — he was convinced of his divinity. He had doubtless seen others crucified; had heard their wails and shrieks, ending in the apathy of coma. But there was nothing here he had ever seen or heard before.

If you take the words to mean "a son of God," that is, "a hero," surely a scream of agony would not have moved a Roman soldier to call the tortured man heroic. But a shout of triumph would.

It is improbable that the centurion understood the words of the cry. But he could read the universal language of facial expression and vocal tone.

3. Consider the influence that last cry appears to have exerted upon others than the centurion.

There were two men of whom one certainly,¹ the other probably,² had been cowards till they saw Christ die. They were Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus. The first is described as "an honorable counsellor." The second is called "a ruler of the Jews." Both were members of the Sanhedrin. The largest charity can hardly doubt that both of them together and probably either of them alone could have arrested the course of the conspirators in the murder of Christ. Excepting the one timid protest of Nicodemus neither of them appears to have interfered in any way with those lawless proceedings. Both appear to have been like Pilate, completely mastered by their fears.

When *they* saw Christ die — and the cry must have been the consummation, the last thing they heard from him — Joseph and Nicodemus were changed from cowards to heroes. The lynxes became lions.

Flinging to the winds their fears, one of them went instantly, openly, bravely to Pilate, asking for the body of Jesus, and by making his garden

¹ Who had certainly played the coward, John xix, 38.

² Probably a coward, John vii, 51. Though he knew he was in the right, he allowed himself to be silenced and received the scant courtesy he merited.

its sepulchre drew upon himself and all his house the deadly hatred of the Jews before whom he had trembled. The other, with equal indifference to the risk he ran, brought an hundredweight of spices to honor the man the nation's rulers had determined to disgrace. Without a moment's hesitation each defied the fury of the malignant faction before which he had cringed so long. This they did only for the privilege of honoring the dead body, when six hours before they had been afraid to venture one word to save the living friend. With no attempt at concealment, with no shade of fear, before the eyes of the crowd which had been so lately yelling maledictions upon Jesus, they bore with profoundest reverence and conspicuous devotion to his memory the body of the Crucified One. Every step they took proclaimed more loudly than words could do, to the priests and rulers they have feared so slavishly, —

“You have crucified the Just One. You have committed an outrageous crime.”

With scarcely greater distinctness and with no more courageous emphasis did Peter say that same thing fifty days later, than Joseph and Nicodemus said it by their actions that Friday afternoon. Was such a change in those two men likely

to be wrought by a cry of weakness and despair which would have seemed to them a justification of their cowardice? It affected them as it affected the centurion.

The conspirators, themselves sorely frightened, hastened to ask Pilate to make the "sepulchre sure." Does that not imply that they knew something had occurred likely to make the disciples attempt to prove that Jesus was not dead? That he had not been vanquished, but had conquered on the cross? If that last cry was a shout of victory, it accounts for their anxiety.

4. I have reminded you that every other recorded utterance of Christ from the cross radiated faith or hope or encouragement or triumphant assurance of victory. Is it probable that at last he sent forth a cry that nullified or at least effaced them all?

5. The instant after uttering the cry, our Lord said: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Is that the utterance of one who thinks himself forsaken?

Some things seem to me incredible. This is one of them: That our Saviour, as the nails crushed through his hands, said, "Forgive them, Father, they know not what they do"; then,

seeing John, "Behold thy mother," and unto her, "Behold thy son"; then to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise"; then, knowing that "all things are now finished that the scriptures might be accomplished," "I thirst"; then, revived by the draught, "It is finished" (that is, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do); then shrieked in despair a conviction that God had forsaken him, and the next instant said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

If that which seems to me an impossibility were a fact; if he who left us an example that we should follow in his steps cried out as we have been mistaught to think, would it not be an abundant justification for our unbelief which so often tempts us to complain, "God has forsaken me"? Shall we watch the sun burning up every cloud that tries to hide it, growing brighter every moment, only to see it rayless and black as the last cloud vanishes?

The thing is incredible. Belief of it has been a nightmare. But the cause of the nightmare is not darkness in the Sun of the world, but ophthalmia in our eyes.

III. From his youth our Lord had fed upon the Scriptures. He declared that they were they

which testified of him, that they contained a prophetic biography of himself. He instructed those who doubted him, because they did not see in him what they expected in the Messiah, to "search the scriptures." It was his custom to clothe his thoughts and express his emotions in the language of Scripture. In the Temptations he quoted Scripture. Even after his resurrection, "beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."¹

There was one psalm—the 22d—which set forth with the emphasis of special detail the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow when they were "finished." It portrays the utmost endeavor of men and circumstances to destroy the sufferer's trust in God, and their ignominious failure to do so. Its unique title indicates that it had been set to a familiar popular air, and formed a part of the temple ritual. It was probably more familiar to the Jews than the "Battle Hymn of the Republic" is to Americans or "Ein Feste Burg" to Germans, and it meant to them more than national anthems mean to modern peoples.

It describes a hero of faith, persecuted,

¹ Luke xxiv, 27.

mocked, despised and rejected of men; treated just as Christ was treated, until at last he is tempted to feel — nay, does actually exclaim — as if God had forsaken him. But out of that extremity he rises by a transcendent exercise of faith into a conviction that God is so near and so sure to deliver him, that the story of his deliverance will become the solace and the inspiration of faithful sufferers to the end of time.

That psalm describes the whole experience of Christ up to the moment when he declared, "It is finished." Then, sure that his work is done; knowing that his every step hitherto has been exactly as the Scriptures predicted it would be; conscious that he has saved the world his Father sent him to save; he broke forth, in a voice to which exaltation of soul gave a quality recognized by all who heard it as the joyful cry of trumpet-toned triumph, with the national hymn of faith's victory. It began, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and concluded with an expression of perfect, unparalleled trust in God's care and assurance of victory. But physical strength was exhausted by the glad outbreak. To complete the psalm, to repeat more than its beginning, was impossible. His heart was breaking, not with grief, but

with joy. He rested a moment; took the vinegar to reënforce his strength, and made one more effort to repeat the psalm. But it was impossible. Power of speech failed. The triumph was still in his face. The centurion saw that. But the Lord had strength only to whisper a few words. They were words which include in a simple sentence the whole essential contents of the psalm: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

There was no need of repeating more of it. Every Jew who heard the first clause would supply the rest.

If a fresh outrage were perpetrated upon the blacks of America, and a great company were assembled to protest against its perpetrators; if some one, seeing the hopeless gloom in every face, should, to encourage the despondent and help them believe it was not useless to fight the evil they deplored, break forth with, "John Brown's body lies a-mouldering in the grave"; if by any circumstance he were prevented from saying more, every one would know that he meant, "Take courage." For all would supply the next line, "His soul is marching on. Glory, glory, hallelujah!"

But commentators five hundred years from

now, reading in a dead language among a people ninety per cent of whom had forgotten the song and none of whom had ever felt its power, might easily infer that the words intended for an assurance of victory had been a confession of defeat ; that they had been uttered as a mournful reminder that the negro's friend was no more, and that there was no one left to carry on his work.

That last cry of our Saviour, uttered after declaring he has finished the work God gave him to do, signified, I cannot doubt, and was understood by every Jew who heard it to signify : "Thou hast not despised the affliction of the afflicted, neither hast thou hid thy face from him. . . . All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nation shall worship before thee."

It was the Saviour's outspoken consciousness of completed victory ; the consciousness that all power in heaven and in earth had been given unto him. Well may it have moved the centurion to exclaim :—

"This was the Son of God."

CHAPTER XVII

THE POWER OF THE CROSS

THERE were thirty-six hours which reveal as no others do the power of the cross. The prophecies of Christ's death were gilded by the predictions of his glory. The histories of his death glitter in the light of his resurrection. An ancient Jew could not think of the suffering Messiah without some vision of the glory that should follow. We cannot think of the cross apart from the glory that has followed. But for thirty-six hours Christ seemed to both his friends and his foes only a dead man. During that period any changes wrought by his influence upon either were caused solely by his behavior on the cross.

The Scriptures teach that we are saved by his death. Let us question those thirty-six hours if haply they may help us to understand at least a part of what the Scriptures mean.

1. When the centurion "which stood over against him" saw him die, he declared:—

"Truly, this man was the Son of God."

That, as we have seen, was the spontaneous

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utterance of a Roman soldier, a man trained to think of deity as the Thunderer. Into this soldier's heart the death of Christ brought a conception of divinity which was the exact contradiction of that which had dominated Rome and the whole world up to that hour.

2. When Christ died, the crowd which watched him began to beat their breasts, and departed silently, as if in awe of the supernatural. These were they who had railed at and cursed him for claiming authority over them. His death made them feel their sins. The darkness, the earthquake, the rent veil of the temple might have excited their fear, but not their consciousness of guilt.

3. Upon the small number who first felt its influence the cross exerted the same kind of influence it has since been gradually gaining over all men. It made the pagan centurion "know the true God," whom to know is life eternal. It made cowards valiant. It made scoffing sinners smite in contrition upon their breasts. Even the reckless and malignant conspirators who bullied Pilate and shouted, "His blood be upon us and our children," when they heard how he died, grew anxious, scarce knowing what they feared. All this the cross accom-

plished before it received a ray of light from the resurrection. And ever since that silent Sunday the cross has been inverting — slowly, but surely — men's conceptions of glory and of shame; making the weak strong and the strong weak; making good men who were cowards, brave; and bad men who were bold, cowards; teaching pagan hearts the knowledge which is "life eternal," the knowledge of the true God. This may help us to understand the meaning of salvation by the death of Christ.

It has been often said that the resurrection is the chief proof of his divinity. I think the opposite is true. The divinity of Christ is the one convincing proof of his resurrection. I should not have been able to see Christ rise if I had not seen him die. No amount of human testimony would convince me that Jesus came back from the grave if the manner of his entering it had not shown me who he was.

It is because I can say with all my heart, "In the cross of Christ I glory," that I am able to believe with all my heart in that resurrection which brought life and immortality to light.

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